

# Reform and Reimagine Birmingham Public Safety

## 2021 REPORT

REPORT OF THE BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS  
AND WOODFIN ADMINISTRATION'S 2021-2025 PUBLIC SAFETY POLICY AGENDA

DECEMBER 10, 2020

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BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE MEMBERS

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Jaselle Houghtlin | Recent UAB Graduate and Co-Founder of the Advocacy Group, Listen |
| Cara McClure      | Co-founder of Black Lives Matter Birmingham                      |
| Victor Revill     | Birmingham Attorney with Revill & Associates                     |
| Joyce Vance       | Former U.S. Attorney of the Northern District of Alabama         |
| Ed Watkins        | Former Birmingham Police Detective                               |

POLICY STAFF

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| B. Fontenot Johnson, J.D. | Office of Mayor Randall L. Woodfin, Director, Division of Social Justice & Racial Equity, Office of P.E.A.C.E. & Policy |
| Katricia D. Flowers       | Executive Administrator to the Senior Advisor and Chief Strategist, Office of Mayor Randall L. Woodfin                  |
| Ed J. Fields              | Senior Advisor & Chief Strategist<br>City of Birmingham Office of Mayor Randall L. Woodfin                              |
| Jarrod Loadholt           | Senior Policy Advisor, Pinestreet Strategies  |

WILLIAM MONROE TROTTER SOCIAL JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE,  
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT,  
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|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Damarcus Bell     | Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Master in Public Policy Candidate, 2022   |
| Samantha Fletcher | Harvard Graduate School of Education, Master of Education in Technology, Innovation, and Education, 2021  |
| Juliahna Green    | Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Master of Public Policy Candidate, 2022   |
| Anil Hurkadli     | Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Master in Public Administration Candidate, 2021   |
| Abby Leibowitz    | University of Colorado School of Medicine, Doctor of Medicine Candidate, 2022, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Master in Public Health Candidate, 2022 |
| Adnan Perwez      | Harvard Divinity School, Master of Theological Studies, 2021  |
| Naomi Vickers     | Harvard College, A.B. Candidate in Economics, 2021  |





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public safety has been both a priority and a challenge of the Woodfin Administration since November 27, 2017. This next iteration of public safety policy for the Woodfin Administration has been developed with a deep appreciation of the health, cultural, economic, and political conditions of the moment. It has also been developed with a recognition of the challenges of the past three years and the lessons learned. Most importantly, this policy has been developed to navigate this moment to build a safe, healthy, and equitable future for Birmingham.

This policy agenda represents a combined effort to implement criminal justice reform and integrate City services in support of public safety using a public health framework. If the sum of the parts is greater than the whole, this should not only improve public safety in Birmingham but reimagine it. The core challenge of reimagining public safety is building new systems while transitioning from old systems that currently are the only available response to public safety crises. This requires the inordinate tasks of building a new infrastructure for a new public safety system while reforming the current system to bridge the gap to this new system. This is the earnest effort that the Woodfin Administration will engage in moving forward.

Though the public safety challenges of Birmingham affect the entire Birmingham community, the threats to public safety in Birmingham are caused by a significantly small percentage of the community. Many of those community members can be diverted from the criminal justice system through educational, social, health, and economic services. Recognizing the limited resources of Birmingham, the Woodfin Administration will work to target non-law enforcement investments to these populations. As such, these policies are centered around those members and aspects of the Birmingham community that are both of highest need and best positioned to have a positive impact on the overall public safety of Birmingham.

Public safety is strongest in those communities where there are shared values and codes of conduct that are adhered to by most community members, and those shared norms serve to maintain a high quality of life for the community. Where there are gaps or obstacles to communities establishing and abiding by those shared values, the government must either directly address these challenges or lend the appropriate support to resolve the issues. Ultimately, this public safety policy is a people-centric approach to improve public safety by: 1) investing in the people and communities that can have the greatest impact on public safety; 2) reforming current public safety operations; 3) creating new infrastructure for a reimagined public safety system; and 4) continuing to improve intergovernmental collaboration.



# MAYOR'S PUBLIC SAFETY POLICY AGENDA

## MAYOR RANDALL WOODFIN'S PUBLIC SAFETY POLICY AGENDA

### Pillar #1: Community Empowerment

- **Strategically focus City resources on to the highest risk and directly impacted members of the community.** Public safety is about people. Using data and a public health framework, the City of Birmingham and its intergovernmental partners will develop processes and protocols that focus and align government investments where they are most needed to improve public safety.
- **Be intentional and visible with transparency, accountability, and community-uniting efforts.** At the heart of public safety is community. While the City has begun to develop programs to connect with community, it still has many strides it can make. Moving forward, the City of Birmingham will implement a sustainable, well-engaged, and effective form of “community policing” using both in-person and technology-based forums as the cornerstone of our public safety infrastructure. This will include expanding regularly scheduled listening sessions and/or town halls to report back on critical data around safety efforts and their efficacy.
- **Make it a policy to publicly publish Birmingham Police Department (BPD) policies.** One way to empower community is to make sure they have access to departmental policy. If the community is to effectively hold the most prominent public safety department in Birmingham accountable, it needs to know the standards of that department. Therefore, the City of Birmingham will begin the process of refining its policies and posting them online.
- **Engage business community in public safety partnerships.** Businesses are not just primary revenue sources for the City or sources of employment for residents, they are also crucial to creating sense of place and culture throughout our 99 neighborhoods. The City will engage the business community as corporate citizens and work to make their environments safer and more hospitable to patrons and employees. This will include working with the business community to address challenges caused by homelessness and stronger partnerships to improve safety and curb appeal in business districts.
- **Create and support viable alternative justice models that support prevention, diversion, and reentry.** Not every offense deserves the full force of the criminal justice system. The City will continue to work internally and with other units of government to determine: 1) viable models of alternative justice, including restorative justice practices; 2) convene stakeholders to discuss potential offenses and venues suitable for alternative justice models; 3) determine the scope, scale, and costs of effectively implementing such models; and 4) work with other units of government to find the resources for implementation.
- **Create community-policing spaces acknowledging and studying past BPD & Alabama-specific injustices.** Essential to Birmingham moving its public safety system forward is acknowledging the harms caused to residents and families under the old system. The City will work with historians, cultural institutions, community members, and others to lay bare our past failures as an institution. This truth telling will serve as a foundation for restoring community trust and the future of community-government relations around public safety.
- **Regularly provide facilitated forums for constituents and officers to dialogue about issues, policies, and other matters that will further community trust and improve public safety.** The City of Birmingham stands to learn crucial lessons about how to better serve the public safety needs of the community if it is willing to hear from its critics. The Woodfin Administration has proven it is willing to participate in constructive dialogues with all community members. However, in these pivotal times, the Administration reasserts this commitment to servant-leadership and engaging the full diversity of voices in the Birmingham community.
- **Build a real-time volunteer bank of community members who want to give their time to assist the community.** There are numerous opportunities for community members to support the City’s public safety efforts. There are also many community members that want to support the City being a safer place. To this end, the City of Birmingham will explore an interdepartmental solution to create a dynamic volunteer bank to support City efforts.

To review the Birmingham Public Safety Task Force recommendations, see page 15.



Pillar #2: Policy & Oversight

- **Establish a more transparent and community-inclusive oversight model to include:**
  - An independent office to drive accountability and implement the Mayor’s recommendations
  - Independent, civilian-led Citizen Advisory Board to receive and mediate civilian complaints filed against BPD officers
  - Data collection and periodic public reporting, including regularly publishing aggregated data on complaints filed against BPD officers
  - An independent citizen complaint process that provides residents with an independent venue to file complaints. The City will also make sure that complaint forms are easily accessible online, over the phone, by mail, in person, and made available in multiple languages.
- **Beyond Breonna’s Law: Reform search warrant execution policies and training.** We honor the life of Breonna Taylor by taking steps similar to those taken by the City of Louisville by instituting our own “Breonna’s Law” – a policy that will prohibit BPD officers from engaging in the kind of high-risk raids that took her life. We also recommend reforms that go beyond prohibiting high-risk “quick knock” raids by reforming Departmental policy related to all search warrants from request to execution to resolution to reporting. It is incumbent on the City to put reasonable protections regarding the execution of search warrants, but also examine how and when BPD engages magistrates and judges issuing warrants.
- **Strengthen early intervention systems to track unlawful officer behavior.** The tragedy of George Floyd’s death was compounded by discoveries that the officer responsible for his death had an extensive history of misconduct. The City will work to create an even more effective system of complaint monitoring and early intervention for the City of Birmingham focused on protecting lives.
- **Adopt and Implement the Domestic and Sexual Violence reforms:**
  - Strengthened, enhanced collaboration between law enforcement and victim service providers/advocates
  - Use of evidence-based lethality assessments and investigative checklists to curb domestic violence-related homicides
  - Improved collection, tracking, and sharing of aggregate data about domestic violence and sexual assault cases within the City of Birmingham
  - Consistent referrals from law enforcement for forensic medical examinations for sexual assault and domestic violence strangulation victims
  - Ongoing, improved training for law enforcement on best practices for responding to and investigating domestic and sexual violence cases
  - Enhanced investigation policies and practices that focus on the offender and account for the effects of trauma victims
  - Specialized law enforcement units assigned to investigate domestic and sexual violence cases, with adequate personnel allocated to support manageable caseloads that recognize the complexity of and vicarious trauma for law enforcement associated with these crimes
  - Clearly stated, defined policies, and protocols for domestic and sexual violence crimes that are routinely trained on throughout the department
  - Participation in multidisciplinary, community team approaches for planning, implementing, and responding to domestic and sexual violence

Pillar #2: Policy & Oversight (Cont.)

- **Ban on facial recognition technology.** Mounting evidence suggests that emerging facial recognition technology consistently misidentifies people of color. Facial recognition technology is banned from the City of Birmingham.
- **Audit all Birmingham Police Department policies, operations, and administration no less than every two years (not including changes in law).** Law enforcement is an ever-evolving field, and the Birmingham community deserves a law enforcement agency that is up to date with the current standards, best practices, and most efficient practices in the field.
- **Public audit of all public safety and public health-related expenditures of the City.** Until the Woodfin Administration, the City of Birmingham operated with a very narrow definition of public safety that only focused on the Birmingham Police Department, Birmingham Fire and Rescue Services (BFRS), and Birmingham Municipal Court. Since March 2019, when the City of Birmingham and the Jefferson County Department of Public Health declared violence a public health emergency, the Woodfin Administration has been working to expand how the City views public safety. In advance of the next budget cycle, the City will examine expenditures citywide that have a potential impact on public safety.
- **Redevelop data policies, data staffing, data analysis, and technology-adoption policies to consider: 1) efficacy; 2) scale; 3) civil liberties; and 4) measures of public safety beyond crime statistics.** Data is a powerful, mandatory tool of 21st century government. However, this tool must be wielded with great skill and responsibility. To ensure the City of Birmingham is responsible in its use of data, the policies and skill sets employed by the City to use data in governance and the deployment of services will be critically assessed and adjusted as needed.

To review the Birmingham Public Safety Task Force recommendations, see page 15.

Pillar #3: Training & Education

- **Reexamine qualifications and training standards (both fitness and education) for first responders to both be hired and promoted, starting with BPD.** Law enforcement needs 21st century skills to address 21st century public safety challenges. To ensure that officers hired by the City have the right skills to advance the City’s public safety strategy, officer training and education will be considered in alignment with advances in addressing the public safety needs of marginalized populations. Education requirements for rank standards and promotional criteria will also be assessed.
- **Integrate curriculum on the following topics into basic officer training:**
  - The history of policing and the history of policing in Birmingham
  - Social interaction & tactical skills
  - Addiction as a disease
  - Elections and law enforcement
  - Implicit bias and cultural responsiveness
  - Increase basic legal education, particularly lawful search, seizure, and arrest statutes/protocol
- **Integrate public education, such as PSAs, into community-policing strategy.** The public can never be overinformed about the challenges of public safety and the respective roles community and government can play to keep Birmingham safer.

To review the Birmingham Public Safety Task Force recommendations, see page 15.

Pillar #4: Safety & Wellness

- **Create a Continuum of Public Health to foster wellness for community members who might otherwise become entangled in the criminal justice system, starting with reentry and violence prevention.** An ounce of prevention is more valuable than a pound of cure. It is often lost in the quest for justice and the pain of victims that a lot of crime can be prevented by directly addressing the needs of those most likely to commit crime before they do. Using a public health approach in a coordinated partnership with other units of government and social service providers, services can be provided to persons most likely to commit crime and prevent them from going down that path.
- **Expand the number of social workers, social scientists, mental health professionals on City staff, including BPD.** The City is in tight fiscal times and positions cost money. However, the impact that public health workers can have on the City's overall safety is significant. Therefore, as the implementation of this agenda progresses, these personnel will be at the forefront of all personnel decisions.
- **Hire a medical director for BFRS as a means of improving the quality of care BFRS can provide when responding to calls for medical assistance.** While BFRS puts out a great number of fires every year, it also provides healthcare to a significant population of people in Birmingham. By instituting a medical director in BFRS, the City can not only expand and improve the quality of services provided, but tap into several health resources.
- **Enhance Police Mental Wellness Guidelines.** Too often the needs and stresses of law enforcement have been overlooked and inadequately addressed. The quality of service provided by the police department begins and ends with quality of the officers giving that service. Their ability to serve residents cannot be separated from their mental wellness. Society's understanding and ability to address mental health and mental wellness have grown exponentially over the past 20 years. Birmingham Police Department officers deserve the full benefit of advances in mental health that can keep them and their loved ones mentally well.
- **Expand strategic partnerships with intergovernmental agencies to expand capacity to address Birmingham-specific issues.** There are a number of county, state, and federal agencies that support public safety in Birmingham (e.g., Birmingham Public Schools, Jefferson County Department of Public Health, Housing Authority Birmingham District, and the Jefferson County District Attorney's Helping Families program addressing school truancy). While the City has enjoyed great relationships with most of these partners, there is a lot more work to be done to scale up coordination of multi-agency teams, data-sharing, and coordination of funds to address specific residents.

To review the Birmingham Public Safety Task Force recommendations, see page 15.

IV

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS  
AND CREDITS FROM  
MAYOR WOODFIN  
AND COUNCILOR  
WILLIAMS



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CREDITS FROM WOODFIN AND COUNCILOR WILLIAMS

On behalf of the City of Birmingham, the Mayor and the City Council would like to thank task force members Jaselle Houghtlin, Cara McClure, Joyce Vance, Victor Revill, and Edward Watkins for their tireless and selfless service to our dear City. We would also like to acknowledge and thank the countless community members that took the time to be civically engaged and share your ideas.

Thank you to the City of Birmingham, both Council and Mayor's office. To name a few, thank you to: AmeriCorps Vista; Chief Moon; Chief Smith; Judge Sparks; Deputy Dir. Deterville-Makori; Chief Fields; Chief Attorney King; Ms. Hill; Dir. Madajczyk; Ms. Watson; District Attorney Carr; Office of Public Information, and countless other public servants for your candidness, availability, and engagement throughout this process.

We would also like to acknowledge Cornell William Brooks and Devon Jerome Crawford of the William Monroe Trotter Collaborative for Social Justice, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and their fall 2020 co-horts dedicated to Birmingham: Damarcus Bell, Samantha Fletcher, Juliaha Green, Anil Hurkadli, Abby Leibowitz, Adnan Perwez, and Naomi Vickers.

Lastly, we would like to acknowledge the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project at Northeastern University School of Law for its work producing the Report on Police Killings in Jefferson County from 1930 to 1970, <https://crrj.org/efforts/police-killings-in-jefferson-county-alabama-1930-1970/>, which provided the context for an understanding of historic police violence in our city and county. The findings in this report are in part the reason why we find ourselves where we are today, and underline the urgency of this moment.

Sincerely,  
Mayor Randall L. Woodfin  
Councilor Hunter Williams, District 2, Chair of Public Safety Committee

V

TASK FORCE  
STATEMENT TO  
MAYOR AND CITY  
OF BIRMINGHAM



We would like to thank Mayor Randall L. Woodfin and Councilor Hunter Williams for the opportunity to lead his Public Safety task force. The task force was established to improve the quality of life for the Birmingham community through improved public safety. The task force takes on this assignment in full recognition of the current social, cultural, and political climates. Thus, we recognize that there is not just a need for reform but also a need to reimagine how the City of Birmingham addresses public safety in the community. We also recognize that substantive change will come through a fundamental change in institutional culture and not solely in a change of personnel. We applaud Mayor Woodfin for his leadership in taking the challenge of public safety reform head-on.

Given the urgency of the moment, Mayor Woodfin granted the task force an initial 90 days and then an additional 30 days to make recommendations for his consideration. These recommendations are intended to account for the roles that government, community members, and civic institutions can play in allying to implement a more effective public safety policy for Birmingham. While there are recommendations for immediate action, there are also recommendations to start building a new infrastructure and system that may takes a few years to fully erect.

The report has grouped the recommendations into four pillars: 1) Community Empowerment; 2) Policy & Oversight, 3) Training & Education, and 4) Safety & Wellness. The pillars should serve as guideposts that assist the City in looking beyond the traditional public safety entities and expanding the coordination of City expenditures in the interest of improved public safety. These recommendations are intended to challenge equally the City, the community, and civic institutions to work collaboratively to do what they can to make Birmingham one of the most safe and healthy cities in the world.

Public safety has aspects that are properly rooted in the traditional criminal justice systems led by law enforcement; however, it also has aspects that are properly rooted in public health. These aspects of public safety should be addressed by social workers, mental health professionals, nonprofits, healthcare professionals, and a variety of other non-enforcement entities. The recommendations presented are intended to push the City to look beyond its traditional public safety entities and rethink how it might further enhance public safety by aligning citywide resources in support of a comprehensive public safety plan rooted in improving the social determinants of health for residents of Birmingham.

The City of Birmingham is currently heavily invested in public safety enforcement and intervention via the Birmingham Police Department (BPD); Birmingham Fire and Rescue (BFRS); and Birmingham Municipal Court (BMC). In recent years, all three of Birmingham's traditional public safety entities have started to shift from a pure focus on enforcement and begun to integrate strategies for prevention and deterrence into their overall strategy. While the City of Birmingham has invested in prevention, intervention, and reentry, it has not done so in a coordinated manner or in a manner proportional to its investment in enforcement.

The City should support and implement efforts to improve public safety that are appropriate given its unique powers as an Alabama municipality. Public safety is also impacted by actions at the county, state, and federal levels of government. To this end, the City of Birmingham should ally with community, civic institutions, and other units of government to advocate for resources and policy changes to support its public safety strategy. Public safety also comes from the self-policing of community norms that are widely accepted and deemed mutually beneficial. The latter is not within the sole power of the City of Birmingham to make a reality; however, the City can play a role through promoting civic literacy and increasing opportunities for community input in policy decisions.

Lastly, these recommendations ultimately reflect the experiences, insights, and ideas of countless Birmingham community members who have bravely voiced their opinion. The in-depth research presented here is designed to help implement our community's vision for the future. We hope that this document will inspire more conversations, and we welcome additional perspectives and feedback as we work toward a new vision of public safety.

Jaselle Houghtlin  
Birmingham Public Safety Task Force Member

Cara McClure  
Birmingham Public Safety Task Force Member

Victor Revill, JD  
Birmingham Public Safety Task Force Member

Joyce Vance, JD  
Birmingham Public Safety Task Force Member

Edward Watkins, PhD  
Birmingham Public Safety Task Force Member

See appendix for Birmingham Public Safety Task Force Members' bios.

VI

# OVERVIEW OF BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



OVERVIEW OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

| PILLAR                | RECOMMENDATIONS   |
|-----------------------|---|
| COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be intentional and visible with transparency, accountability, and community-uniting efforts</li><li>• Publish all BPD policies</li><li>• Engage the business community in public safety partnerships</li><li>• Create and support viable alternative justice models that support prevention, diversion, and reentry</li><li>• Hold regularly scheduled listening sessions and/or town halls to report back on critical data around safety efforts and efficacy</li><li>• Consider potential collateral damage to community trust as a core part of internal equations when evaluating effectiveness of proposed strategy</li><li>• Create community-policing spaces acknowledging and studying past BPD &amp; Alabama-specific injustices</li><li>• Update BPD website to reflect transparency, including accessible publication of BPD policies</li><li>• Regularly meet with constituents demanding reform, i.e., Black Lives Matter, families of persons killed by police, and other organizations; an outside facilitator should be present</li><li>• Build a real-time database of community members who want to give their time to assist the community</li></ul>   |
| POLICY & OVERSIGHT    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public audit of all public safety and public health-related expenditures of the City</li><li>• Establish a more transparent and community-inclusive oversight model to include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Inspector General</li><li>- Auditor</li><li>- Civilian-led Public Safety Advisory Board</li><li>- Data collection and public reporting</li><li>- Complaint process that provides a non-law enforcement entity to take complaints</li></ul></li><li>• Adopt and Implement the domestic and sexual violence recommendations of One Place MDT</li><li>• Redevelop data policies, data staffing, data analysis and technology-adoption policies to consider: 1) efficacy; 2) scale; 3) civil liberties; and 4) measures of public safety beyond crime statistic</li><li>• Reassess all rules and regulations no less than bi-annually (not including changes in law). Make sure that complaint forms are easily accessible online, over the phone, by mail, and in person. These forms should be made available in multiple languages</li><li>• Establish early intervention systems to track unlawful officer behavior</li><li>• Strengthen duty to intervene and duty to report policies</li><li>• Include non-law enforcement staff on investigatory panels</li><li>• Regularly publish data on complaints filed against police officers</li><li>• Publicly publish and make accessible Birmingham Police Department policies</li><li>• Minimize the use of coercive tactics and technological surveillance in the Birmingham Police Department</li></ul> |

| PILLAR               | RECOMMENDATIONS  |
|----------------------|--|
| TRAINING & EDUCATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reassess officer training and education considering advances in addressing the public safety needs of marginalized populations</li><li>• Reexamine qualifications and training standards for the hiring and promotion of first responders, starting with the Birmingham Police Department</li><li>• Add advanced education requirements to rank standards and promotional criteria</li><li>• Advocate for the Jefferson County Personnel Board to strengthen the qualifications and academic requirements for police officers and sheriffs</li><li>• Integrate curriculum on the following topics into basic officer training:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The history of policing and the history of policing in Birmingham</li><li>- Social interaction &amp; tactical skills</li><li>- Addiction as a disease</li><li>- Elections and law enforcement</li><li>- Implicit bias and cultural responsiveness, specifically for people of color, women, gender nonconforming people, LGBTQ people, youth, undocumented immigrants, people with limited English proficiency, people with disabilities, religious and ethnic groups, low-income people, people experiencing homelessness, and other groups</li><li>- Increase basic legal education, particularly lawful search, seizure, and arrest statutes/protocol</li><li>- Communicate effectively with people who have limited English proficiency (LEP), who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who have other disabilities that affect communication</li><li>- Policing in a democratic society</li></ul></li></ul>                    |
| SAFETY & WELLNESS    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply an evidence-based, public health approach to address the policy factors that facilitate violence and mass incarceration in our communities<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Birmingham should advocate for reduced gun availability at the local, state, and national levels using legislation to limit handgun purchases, including those at gun shows; limit access to high-powered assault pistols with no legitimate sporting or hunting purpose; and reduce access to permits-to-carry a concealed handgun.</li><li>- Focus police involvement on the most serious offenses by decriminalizing activities whose historical purpose has been to police and control marginalized people; ensure that these decriminalized offenses are not within the purview of law enforcement. Priority activities for decriminalization include substance use and possession, sex work, loitering, sleeping in public, and minor traffic violations (expired registrations, jaywalking, broken taillights).</li><li>- Build a cohesive data collection and analysis system to enhance public safety and public health initiatives. The City should support the use of technologies that protect civil liberties while improving health and safety, encouraging appropriate data sharing, and using publicly informed evaluations to regularly refine data collection techniques.</li><li>- While leveraging data to promote wellness in all communities, the City of Birmingham should carefully consider potential impacts on individual privacy, dignity, and legal rights.</li></ul></li></ul> |

**SAFETY &  
WELLNESS  
(Cont.)**

- Implement a Continuum of Public Health model to address public health issues that lead to public safety issues, particularly around violence prevention, homelessness, and violence interruption
  - Develop robust community-based violence prevention programs, including those specifically designed to address domestic violence.
  - Develop an additional branch of public safety that dispatches medics and mental health professionals to nonviolent 911 calls.
  - For 911 calls that do require medical assistance, improve the quality of care delivered by hiring a medical director for Birmingham Fire and Rescue Service.
  - Invest in wraparound treatment centers whose mission is to promote individual and community wellness through therapeutic, rehabilitative services as an alternative to cycles of incarceration.
  - Employ at least nine total data analysts who can advise on data collection techniques, analyze existing data, and provide summary reports in order to implement future changes based on robust evidence.
  - Utilize paired advocates to assist individuals who interact frequently with Crisis Responder or BPD.
  - Incorporate principles of trauma-informed care across all sectors of law enforcement and social services.
  - Commit to reallocation of funding from law enforcement agencies toward the development of a sustainable, long-term Continuum of Public Health, which addresses violence and minimizes harm without criminalizing entire communities. These financial reforms shall expand the number of social workers and mental health professionals employed by the City of Birmingham.
- Create law enforcement officers who are poised to serve the community to the full extent of their training, skills, and judgment by improving the wellness and safety of officers
  - The Birmingham Police Department must promote safety and wellness at every level of the organization.
  - The Birmingham Police Department should minimize the potential harms from working in law enforcement by (1) providing every law enforcement officer with individual tactical first-aid kits, tactical first-aid kit training, and anti-ballistic vests, and (2) adopting policies that require officers to wear seat belts and bullet-proof vests, and provide training to raise awareness of the consequences of failure to do so.
  - The Birmingham Police Department should minimize the potential for impaired judgment due to sleep deprivation by implementing scientifically supported shift lengths.
  - The Birmingham Police Department should lay the groundwork for future evidence-based improvements by collecting data regarding officer deaths and injuries, as well as near-miss events.
- Birmingham Police Department policies should support the well-being of officers and their families by (1) recognizing fitness for duty examinations as definitive evidence of valid duty or non-duty-related disability in pension plans, and (2) providing Public Safety Officer Benefits to survivors of officers killed while working, regardless of whether the officer used safety equipment (seat belt or anti-ballistic vest) or if officer death was the result of suicide attributed to a current diagnosis of duty-related mental illness, including but not limited to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

## VII

# PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



The greatest challenges to this process were the barriers to traditional engagement raised by the current pandemic. The second greatest challenge was the vast scope of the topic and the number of stakeholders impacted. However, the task force was clear that any credible recommendations must include thoughtful deliberation of the insights, concerns, and ideas of the many stakeholders in Birmingham Public Safety. The task force took direction from unprecedented impact of President Obama’s 2015 task force on 21st Century Policing. The Obama process was an anchor point because of its sustained influence on policy across administrations. This engagement process was initiated for its sustainable impact.<sup>1</sup>

The task force worked from July 13, 2020 to October 24, 2020. Given the urgency of the moment, Mayor Woodfin granted the task force an initial 90 days and then an additional 30 days to make recommendations for his consideration. During this period, the task force held 30 working meetings, 11 listening sessions, and circulated a survey to 127 BPD officers.

The task force reviewed Birmingham Police Department’s Policies (Rules and Regulations) and suggested edits to the following: Traffic Patrol Techniques, Body-Worn Cameras, Complaints, Investigations and Disciplinary Action, Vehicle Mounted Audio/Video Recording, Recruit Training Program and Employee Assistance.

The task force looked at the issues related to how it could reform current policing practices and initiatives that could help the City reimagine public safety. Some of the issues explored included, but were not exclusive to, the following:

POLICE REFORM

- 1. BPD Advisory Board
- 2. Inspector General
- 3. No-knock Warrants/Nighttime Warrants
- 4. Greater Qualifications for BPD Officers and Supervisory Personnel
- 5. Alternative Justice Models
  - a. Violence Reduction, Restorative Justice, etc.
  - b. Juvenile Jail Diversion Programs
- 6. Policies Already Voted on Prior to the List

PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVES

- 1. Community Investment
  - a. Need More Resources for Youth
- 2. Participatory Budgeting
- 3. Alternative Justice Models
- 4. Civic Literacy Driven Through Public Service Announcements
- 5. Domestic Violence – Protecting Women
- 6. Need to Have Events That Involve the Community and Police Over a Certain Amount of Time
- 7. Medical Director and Social Workers for Birmingham Fire and Rescue Services
- 8. More Mental Health Facilities per BFRS, Municipal Court, and BPD
- 9. Blue Cameras for Small Businesses

<sup>1</sup> President’s task force on 21st Century Policing. 2015. Final Report of the President’s task force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, D.C.: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-p311-pub.pdf>

PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



YouGov Survey



KEY BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SAFETY DATA

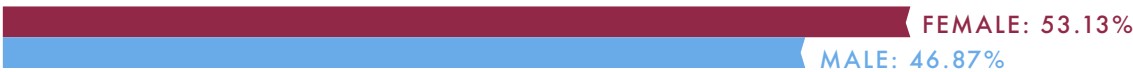
Birmingham Demographics

CURRENT POPULATION OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA:

208,940

It is the **largest city** in Alabama

BIRMINGHAM GENDER RATIO

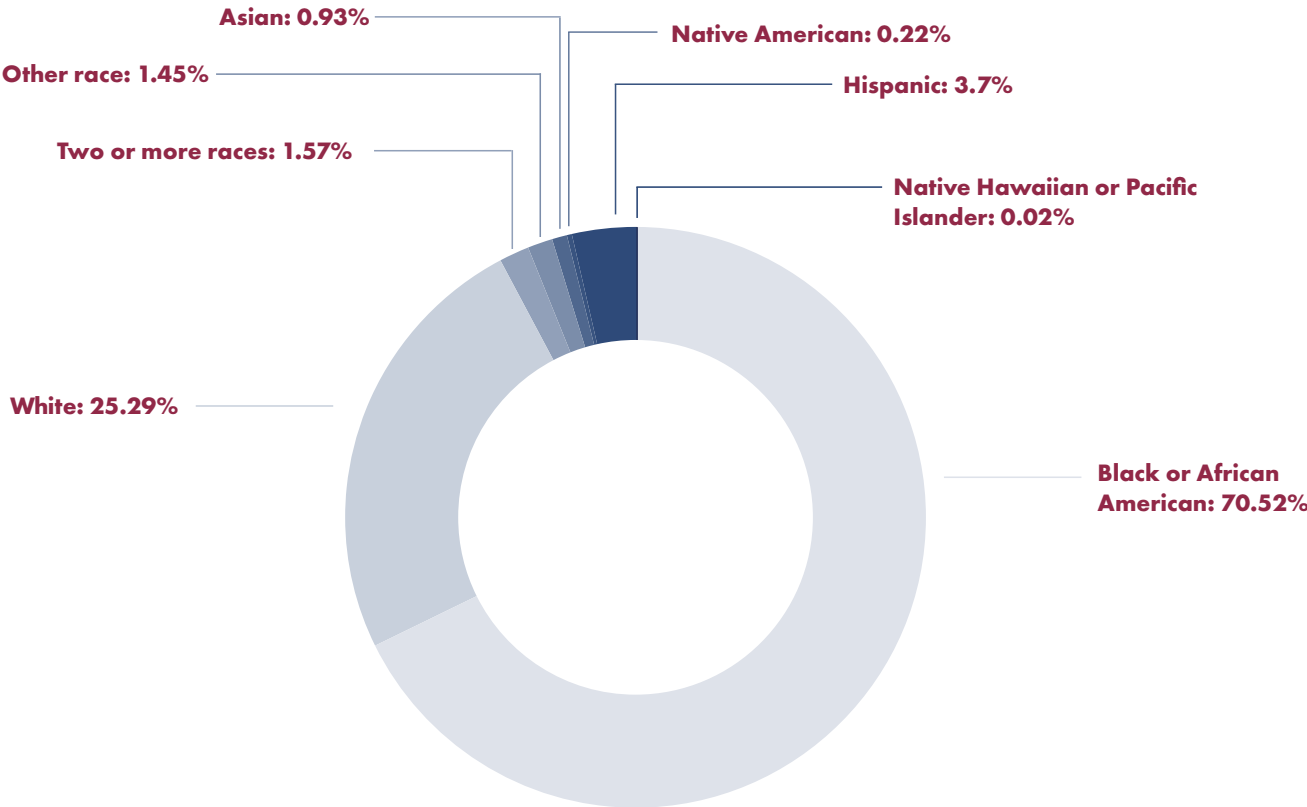


BIRMINGHAM MEDIAN AGE

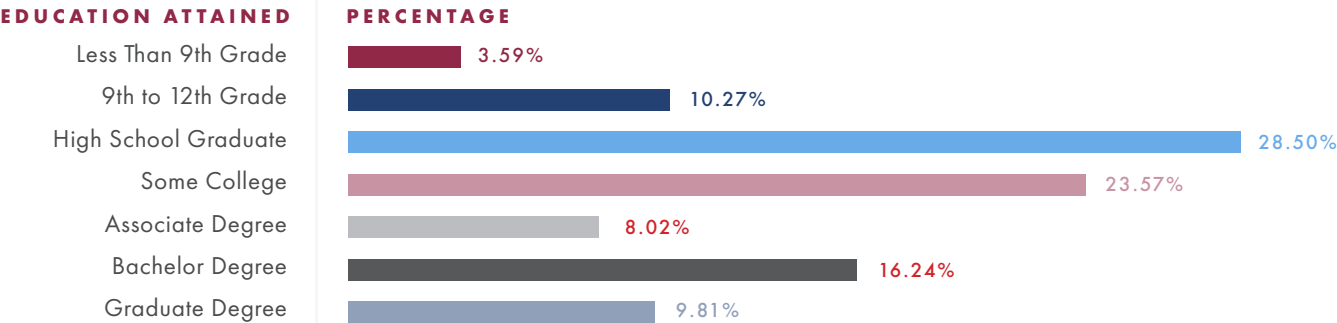


BIRMINGHAM DEMOGRAPHICS POPULATION BY RACE

According to the most recent ACS, the racial composition of Birmingham was:



BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION (ADULTS OVER 25)



BIRMINGHAM INCOME BY HOUSEHOLD



Source: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/birmingham-al-population>



BIRMINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT  
CRIME INFORMATION PART I OFFENSES  
AS OF NOVEMBER 16, 2020

| CITYWIDE       |          |          |          |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| CRIME TYPE     | YTD 2020 | YTD 2019 | % CHANGE |
| Homicide       | 96       | 83       | 15.7%    |
| Rape           | 79       | 149      | -47.0%   |
| Robbery        | 441      | 717      | -38.5%   |
| Agg. Assaults  | 2273     | 2692     | -15.6%   |
| Total Violent  | 2889     | 3641     | -20.7%   |
| Burglary       | 1482     | 2247     | -34.0%   |
| Auto Theft     | 1256     | 1856     | -32.3%   |
| UBEV           | 1530     | 2244     | -31.8%   |
| Theft          | 4651     | 5978     | -22.2%   |
| Total Property | 8919     | 12325    | -27.6%   |
| Total Part I   | 11808    | 15966    | -26.0%   |

BIRMINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT INFORMATIONAL REQUEST

The below information is in response to the informational requests dated November 6, 2020 from the Office of Peace and Policy.

| POLICE CALLS FOR SERVICE<br>(JANUARY 01, 2020 THRU OCTOBER 31, 2020)   |              |
|--|--------------|
| Calls Answered   | 541,006      |
| Calls Dispatched   | 415,80       |
| Calls on Alarms  | 5,580        |
| NUMBER OF SWORN OFFICERS   |              |
| Sworn Officers (As of 11/10/20)  | 704          |
| ANNUAL BUDGET BY PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONS  |              |
| Sworn / Civilian Combined  | \$62,042,606 |
| Operational  | \$42,577,044 |
| PRECINCT OFFICERS CITYWIDE ON AVERAGE BY SHIFT (CURRENTLY)   |              |
| Alpha (0600-1600)  | 45           |
| Bravo (1100-2100)  | 13           |
| Charlie (1600-0200)  | 54           |
| Delta (2100-0600)  | 45           |
| Number of Special Events Staffed by BPD  |              |
| The Special Events Unit has staffed and managed 199 special events this year.  |              |
| The four Police Precincts staff on average 200 small special events each year.   |              |
| These include school and church parades, food and school supply giveaways, fireworks displays, events at City parks, eat in the street, etc. |              |
| Number of Citations for City Ordinance violations  |              |
| Ecite and Uniform Traffic Citations (As of 10/31/20):  | 27,910       |

BIRMINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
FIRE COMMUNICATIONS

YEARLY TOTALS BY MONTH AND CATEGORY

| YEARLY TOTALS FOR 2020 |       |       |       |      |    |       |       |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|----|-------|-------|
| MONTH                  | ALS   | BLS   | EMS   | FIRE | FE | TOTAL | TRANS |
| January                | 2909  | 1938  | 4847  | 761  | 7  | 5615  |       |
| February               | 2927  | 1771  | 4698  | 704  | 7  | 5409  |       |
| March                  | 3013  | 1853  | 4866  | 651  | 7  | 5524  |       |
| April                  | 2503  | 1593  | 4096  | 668  | 8  | 4772  |       |
| May                    | 2777  | 1824  | 4601  | 654  | 5  | 5260  |       |
| June                   | 2948  | 1996  | 4944  | 797  | 10 | 5752  |       |
| July                   | 3158  | 2286  | 5444  | 848  | 7  | 6299  |       |
| August                 | 3031  | 2149  | 5180  | 699  | 1  | 5880  |       |
| September              | 2834  | 2011  | 4845  | 739  | 8  | 5592  |       |
| October                | 2993  | 2099  | 5092  | 728  | 4  | 5824  |       |
| November               |       |       |       |      |    |       |       |
| December               |       |       |       |      |    |       |       |
| YTD/TOTAL              | 29093 | 19520 | 48613 | 7249 | 64 | 55927 |       |

AVERAGES

| DAILY: | WEEKLY: | MONTHLY: |
|--------|---------|----------|
|--------|---------|----------|

There was a 1.2% increase of total calls from 2018 to 2019.

| EMS                                | ALS                                   | BLS                                    | FIRE                                  | FIRE/EMS                      | FIRE FATALITIES |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| calls made up                      | calls made up                         | calls made up                          | calls made up                         | calls made up                 |                 |
| 87%                                | 62.3%                                 | 37.7%                                  | 13.1%                                 | 0.1%                          | 2012-6          |
| of all responses.                  | of all ems responses and              | of all ems responses and               | of all responses.                     | of all responses.             | 2013-11         |
| With a decrease of 0.0% from 2018. | 54%                                   | 32.7%                                  | This is a decrease of 0.7% from 2018. | There is no change from 2018. | 2014-10         |
|                                    | This is a decrease of 0.2% from 2018. | This is an increase of 0.3% from 2018. |                                       |                               | 2015-5          |
|                                    |                                       |  |                                       |                               | 2016-7          |
|                                    |                                       |  |                                       |                               | 2017-3          |
|                                    |                                       |  |                                       |                               | 2018-3          |
|                                    |                                       |  |                                       |                               | 2019-9          |

\*Note: all percentages are rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

|      |                            |                         |  |
|------|----------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Key: | Als- advanced life support | Bls- basic life support | Fe- fire / ems (emergency medical service) |
|------|----------------------------|-------------------------|--|

See appendix for call type chart.

BIRMINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

BFRS OPERATES

32 fire stations

24 hours a day

365 days a year

It takes **142** personnel to keep the doors of all **32** stations open each shift.  
BFRS runs three 24-hour shifts.

BFRS ANNUALLY RESPONDS TO OVER  
**67,000 CALLS**  
PER YEAR

over  
**183**  
incidents every  
**24**  
hours

On February 1, 2020  
BFRS WAS BUDGETED FOR  
**715 PERSONNEL**

Due to budget pandemic-related cuts,  
BFRS' PERSONNEL BUDGET WAS REDUCED TO  
**676 PERSONNEL**

CURRENTLY, 618 POSITIONS ARE FILLED.

715 - 618 = 97  
(full staffing) (current staffing) personnel short

BFRS FISCAL YEAR 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

**\$64,316,898**

## VIII

# AMERICAN PUBLIC SAFETY

## AMERICAN PUBLIC SAFETY

What is commonly referred to as “structural racism” is in fact the persistent presence of inequities, injustices, and disparities for Black people and other marginalized groups in America. One of the fiercest guardians of structural racism is the American public safety system. Originating with the enslavement of Africans that would come to be known as “Black,” chattel slavery designated Black people as property. The American policing system was primarily focused on securing property, with interpersonal disputes often relegated to private persons to enforce. The way persons are policed shifted based on the legal status of Black Americans as property, not people.<sup>2</sup> The tolerance for the use of force to subdue a thing is far greater than the tolerance for the use of force against a person. The entanglement with chattel slavery diminishes the value of BIPOC's (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) civil liberties and humanity, and has created a culture of public safety that tolerates the abuse of BIPOC persons under the color of law.

American public safety has been developed along a continuum that spans from criminal justice to public health. These systems were developed in Alabama during Black American slavery, the Antebellum South, and the formation of American apartheid in the Post-Reconstruction and Jim Crow South. “The institution of slavery and the control of minorities...were two of the more formidable historic features of American society shaping early policing.”<sup>3</sup> The entwinement of American policing with slavery and Jim Crow apartheid is most significant in understanding how Black people are policed and their longstanding disproportionate dissatisfaction with law enforcement.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the American public health regime, most famously via the “Tuskegee Experiment,” was unethically developed on the backs of Black people by developing treatments through experimentation on Black bodies and not affording Black people access to the treatments their bodies were sacrificed to create. Scholars such as Michelle Alexander have researched and documented the role the government has played in facilitating the insidious entrapment of Black people in the criminal justice system, and the failure of law and policy to address the underlying needs of marginalized people.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> G Potter - Eastern Kentucky University Police Studies Online, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> G Potter - Eastern Kentucky University Police Studies Online, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/06/03/10-things-we-know-about-race-and-policing-in-the-u-s/>

<sup>5</sup> Alexander, M. (2010). The new Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness. The New Press.



# A BRIEF HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF POLICING IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

*“Birmingham is infamously the City whose Commissioner of Public Safety in 1963 set police dogs on demonstrating children. Flashed on television screens across the world were shocking images of youngsters locked up in the Birmingham jail because they participated in civil rights marches. Bull Connor's reign did not, however, commence in the 1960s. His lethal hatred of Black people can be evinced in the less dramatic but far more routine killings of Black men by police officers under his control in the 1940s and 1950s. These were both policy choices: the dogs were meant to teach a lesson and quell a movement, whereas the shooting deaths of Black men a decade or so earlier were intended to deflate Black resistance and economic aspirations.”*

- Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project<sup>6</sup>

While there has not as of yet been the level of research into violence between the police and community since 1970, the seeds of the relationship between the community and police in Birmingham is laid bare by a recent study of police killing in Jefferson County conducted by Northeastern University School of Law, *Police Killings in Jefferson County, Alabama: 1930-1970*.<sup>7</sup> These excerpts of key findings are meant to serve as an example of how history can facilitate a better understanding of the best path forward.

## Demographic Findings

- Civil Rights and Restorative Justice (CRRJ) identified 127 police homicides in Jefferson County between 1932 and 1968.<sup>8</sup>
- Of the victims in these cases, 123 were killed by police and 4 were killed by watchmen.
- Of the 127 victims, 121 were African American men, 2 were African American women, and 4 were white men.<sup>9</sup>
- In other words, over 96% of those killed by police during this time period were African American. To CRRJ's knowledge, all of the officers involved in the killings were white.

## Location of Shooting

- Approximately 79 of the victims (62%) were killed in public spaces, with approximately 42 of these fatalities occurring on the streets of Birmingham.
  - In many of the street shootings, police had stopped the victim on minor charges. For instance, one 16-year-old victim was stopped for throwing rocks at cars;<sup>10</sup> another was stopped for standing “in the shadows;”<sup>11</sup> another for congregating in a group.<sup>12</sup>
  - The remaining public shootings occurred in establishments such as theaters, stores, restaurants, gas stations, dance halls, churches, elementary schools, and barbershops. Some victims were shot while driving. Others were killed while they were at work.
- In approximately 33 cases (26%), the victims were shot and killed in private spaces, such as their own home or the home of another private citizen.
- CRRJ identified 11 individuals who were killed while in police custody.
  - Some were killed in the backseat of patrol vehicles following their arrest. Others were killed in jail. Most of these victims were unarmed by all accounts. Often, multiple officers were present.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Title: Police Killings in Jefferson County, Alabama: 1930-1970, Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project

<sup>7</sup> Burnham, Faunce, Sandson. Police Killings in Jefferson County, Alabama: 1930-1970

<sup>8</sup> “The data in the report represents only the cases that CRRJ was able to identify and confirm from newspaper records, federal and local law enforcement files, and the files of civil rights organizations. There were likely additional police killings that were not captured by CRRJ's research, due to their absence from these sources or limitations on CRRJ's access to sources. All of our research and determinations about demographics, location, and legal aftermath were made based on the sources available to CRRJ.

<sup>9</sup> The Birmingham Police Department did not hire its first Black officer until March 1966. NICK PATTERSON, BIRMINGHAM FOOT SOLDIERS: VOICES FROM THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT (2014). Only 13 of the cases identified by CRRJ occurred after this date, and 10 of these officers are listed as white in Birmingham Police Department records. For the remaining 3, the officer's race is not listed in departmental records or news coverage, but there is no indication that any of these officers were Black.

<sup>10</sup> Tom Lankford and Irving Beiman, The Day a Church Became a Tomb, THE BIRMINGHAM NEWS, Sept. 16, 1963, at 6.

<sup>11</sup> Officers Shoot Negro Who Slashed, TALLADEGA DAILY HOME, Mar. 24, 1950 at 4.

<sup>12</sup> Birmingham Police Probe Shooting, THE MONTGOMERY ADVISOR, May 8, 1966, at 21.

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., Police-Killed Vernon Kidd Given Final Rites on Sunday, BIRMINGHAM WORLD, June 5, 1951 at 1 (noting that Vernon Kidd was killed in the back of a police car); Officer Beats, Kills Suspect, New York Amsterdam News, May 25, 1940, at 2 (noting that multiple witnesses were present when O'Dee Henderson was beaten and shot at the Fairfield Police Station).

- In the remaining 4 cases, the location of the killing was unknown.

### Legal Aftermath

- In sum, thorough investigations of police killings of African Americans in Jefferson County were rare. Prosecutions were even rarer, and even when officers were brought to trial, they were typically acquitted. The absence of external investigations and legal proceedings in the vast majority of these cases illustrates that the use of force against primarily African American residents of Jefferson County was not taken seriously by those in positions of power.
- Approximately 85% of the police killings that CRRJ identified were ruled a “justifiable homicide” by the coroner. After each fatality, following an internal police investigation, the coroner determined whether the police were justified in the killing. These internal investigations were typically conducted by two police officers and the coroner, who generally accepted the account of the officers involved.
- An external investigation took place in only a handful of cases. CRRJ identified only four cases in which grand juries were convened. Because grand jury records are typically sealed, the outcomes of these proceedings are often unknown. In three of the four cases identified by CRRJ, newspapers reported that the grand jury declined to indict the officer.
- The federal government investigated a small number of police homicides in Jefferson County, typically after a family member of the victim or the NAACP wrote to the Department of Justice (DOJ). The DOJ opened investigations into at least three cases but declined to prosecute any of them, concluding that there had been no federal civil rights violations.<sup>14</sup>
- CRRJ has identified only two cases in which the officers involved were arrested, charged, and brought to trial: both cases yielded non-guilty verdicts.<sup>15</sup>

## HISTORICAL IMPACT ON CONTEMPORARY POLICING & EFFORTS TO TRANSFORM

This data can assist reform-minded police departments who seek to confront this history of racial terror and incorporate its meaning in their present-day mission to protect public safety. We can only break the cycle with meaningful dialogue based in truth.

Efforts to repair police-community relations and achieve meaningful reform require confronting law enforcement's historical role in perpetuating racial violence. This engagement with the past requires that police departments first have a full understanding and accounting of their own local histories. Using the example of Jefferson County, Ala., this report illustrates the lessons that can be learned from research into historical police violence and how this research can lay the foundation for further dialogue, education, and reparative processes.

## CONTEXTUAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### Investigations of Historical Police Violence

A first step toward addressing historical police violence is understanding the scope of this history and recording a full accounting of the events that occurred. This report reflects the findings of CRRJ's investigations into police killings in Jefferson County. Jefferson County has a particularly egregious history of police violence against African Americans, as demonstrated by the data on page 32 of this report, which addresses exclusively Jim Crow-era violence. But this history was not unique to Jefferson County. By investigating and publicizing the history of racial violence in their own localities — whether during the Jim Crow era or a different historical time — scholars, activists, and local officials can better understand the roles that law

enforcement and government actors played in this history and identify opportunities for repair.

### Acknowledgments and Dialogue

Once there has been an investigation into a particular set of historical injustices and a detailed account of this history has been developed, an acknowledgment or apology by the departments or institutions involved can play an important role in the healing process for the victims, their families, and their communities. By acknowledging the harm that occurred and accepting responsibility for the actions of the department, police and local officials can demonstrate respect for families and communities impacted by historical injustices and lay the groundwork for reconciliation.

### Law Enforcement Training

Law enforcement personnel need to understand and engage with the history of racial violence. Understanding this history can help reduce implicit bias and increase trust between communities and police. Training for police departments can help teach officers about the role that law enforcement has played in incidents of racial violence and help officers better understand the experiences of the communities they serve.

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., Memorandum from Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation to Francis X. Walker, Acting Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division (Jan. 11, 1950) (Dep't of Justice File 144-1-81) (stating that the Department of Justice is closing its files on the case of Charlie Lewis after finding that further investigation is unwarranted).

<sup>15</sup> Policeman Acquitted on Charge He Killed Negro in Birmingham, THE DECATUR DAILY, Jan. 26, 1950 at 11; Officer Goes on Trial in Slaying, BIRMINGHAM POST, June 17, 1940, at 1; Officer Acquitted in Negro's Slaying, BIRMINGHAM POST, June 20, 1940, at § 2, Page 9.



# RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## PILLAR #1:

### COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

#### Structure

Community empowerment focuses on systematically building a community that is binded together through a deep-rooted sense of belonging, duty, and kinship. This intertwinement focuses on tightly knitting all the different bodies that make up a community, including the general citizenship, the police force, and local organizations.

Keeping this in mind, the below recommendations focus on building and deeply cementing three core principles: transparency, accountability, and authentic relationship building. Recommendations to further these principles span the spectrum of bodies that make up a community. In regard to structure, the pillar will begin with a general scope of the problem, defining major goals and trends, before moving into specific area recommendations.

#### I. Scope of the Problem

##### Major Goals:

- I. Refining policies to ensure methods to increase community accountability and empowerment are institutionally built-in, and anchored in a way that can spark a significant internal cultural shift. This includes methods for those transitioning back into society after serving time for criminal offenses.
- II. Focus on establishing not simply a good relationship between the police department and communities, but a deeper sense of understanding that comes with familiarity with history, context, and is rooted in genuine empathy for those they serve.
- III. Find doable, trend-setting approaches to engage the community and empower them to have active roles and voices in positive practices of public safety and in supporting each other. Focus on transparency, accountability, and community unity.

##### On Leveraging Incentivization Structures:

In order to anchor and institutionalize these practices, incorporation within currently existing incentivization structures (factors included in the performance evaluation review of officers emerges as a particularly key issue; as well as the importance of which factors are included when evaluating the internal research conducted around the viability of a strategy) is necessary.

In tandem with this shift, there must be additional incentivization structures and policies created wherever necessary. Ideas to this end can include seeking grants that reward officers or patrol teams that score consistently high marks on citizen evaluation feedback, intertwining such feedback as part of internal requirements in how officers are promoted, focusing on evaluations during City budget or grant allocations, and so on.

While individual officers that are trained under a different philosophy of policing may take time to change, incentivization structures that come from the top-down, and are then reinforced consistently, can be especially valuable opportunities for leadership to quicken the pace of change.

##### On Increasing CPO & CSO Utility:

Much of the national conversation is shifting to how to ensure scenarios that require a nonviolent response (i.e., individuals with mental health issues) can be engaged with trained professionals with expertise in the area, rather than a police force trained to respond to violent crimes.

The BPD is ahead in this department. The force already has the Crime Prevention Officers (CPO) and Community Service Officers (CSO) branches — the question is figuring out how to increase staff members through targeted recruiting, plug them in in a way where they can be quickly dispatched cohesively, and ensure that the critique and feedback they collect is institutionalized.

For an understanding of how these staff members can be rapidly deployed through the creation of a trained civilian dispatch service, we can refer to the City of Albuquerque later on. It serves as a model city in regard to creating a dispatch system that can quickly and efficiently deploy trained professionals for nonviolent incidents.



Such methods to strengthen, sharpen, and smoothen the deployment of existing resources is ultimately far more cost- and resource-efficient than to have to build one entirely from scratch. The foothold the CPO and CSO branches already have — in regard to connections with the BPD, budget allocations, and reputation within the larger community — means the focus now shifts to how both the recruiting, allocation, and deployment of such resources can be ironed out.

## II. Summary of Recommendations

### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S TASK FORCE ON 21ST CENTURY POLICING, CONTEXTUALIZED FOR THE CITY

The President's task force on 21st Century Policing report, published in 2015, served as an initial blueprint for many police departments. One academic study noted that, in the following two years, about 40% of the nation's largest police departments changed training and use-of-force policies.<sup>16</sup>

For all of its strengths in its analysis, the fact remains that the vast majority of the nation's police departments are decentralized — a fact that the authors of the report themselves highlight.<sup>17</sup>

No one report produced at the federal level can adequately account for the unique context and structures of every local PD. With this in mind, we would like to extract three specific key recommendations from the President's task force that, placed within the wider context of Birmingham's structure and history, can be especially useful and implementable for the City.

- Any internal research conducted on the effectiveness of particular crime-fighting strategies, whether through the City, the BPD, or outside independent organizations, must explicitly include factors that can measure potential collateral damage on community trust and legitimacy as a key benchmark in determining the viability of said strategy.<sup>18</sup>
- Engage in listening spaces and incorporate in training curriculum-particular sessions with a focus on understanding and acknowledging the role of policing in past and present injustices (with case studies specific to the local BPD) to help increase a culture of transparency and building community trust.<sup>19</sup>
- Adopt a formal preference for seeking “least harm” resolutions whenever possible: i.e., diversion programs or citations/warnings instead of arrests for minor infractions. To help entrench this view in the institutional culture, look into ways to incentivize this behavior. Some notable methods include: keeping statistics on numbers of such “least harm” resolutions and tracking them; teaching “least harm” resolutions through a flow-chart/session within training; incorporating them as a key part of performance evaluations' pervasive inclusion of a “Hippocratic Oath for Policing: First, Do No Harm” that all recruits pledge to, and is constantly reinforced.<sup>20, 21</sup>

### FROM LOCAL STRUCTURES:

Different listening sessions within Birmingham, as well as conversations more nationally, indicate a clear trend toward creating a mechanism of crisis intervention that exists apart from the police — a move made particularly urgent in face of increasing studies showing the lack of efficacy in deploying a response crafted for a violent offense in the service of a nonviolent offense.<sup>22, 23, 24</sup>

With both the local and the national landscape in mind, we recommend the following immediate steps that can be taken to increase the CPO and CSO infrastructure. The goals here primarily revolve around: recruitment, intertwinement, and deployment.

### On Recruitment:

- Engaging in targeted recruitment that helps diversify the demographics present within the CPO/CSO arm under the Patrol Bureau across race, ethnic, gender, orientation, etc. lines. To maximize efficiency of this diversity push, demographic studies can be taken of current CPO/CSO structure, which, in combination with community needs, can be formulated into identifying the key areas where more recruitment is necessary. Working then with local community organizations that serve those communities to recruit more staff is a strong way to ensure new CPO/CSO members are deeply embedded within the communities they aim to serve.

### On Intertwinement:

- Focusing on informational gaps that may be tightened or closed, between CPO/CSO and the BPD. Incorporating CPO and CSO feedback within overall performance evaluations; if there are no institutionalized sessions where CPO/CSO staff provide feedback and share critique with the PD, opening up such a session to operate regularly with the relevant Precinct captain and the specific CPO/CSO staff that also serve that Precinct. Annual debrief with full Patrol Bureau and CPO/CSO staff.

### On Deployment:

- Building an infrastructure of rapid response that allows the CPO/CSO team to be deployed in efficient and targeted ways. Such infrastructure can include: establishing a separate hotline for nonviolent responders; collecting and sharing more specific data about nonviolent crimes to help map out major geospatial locations that can be used for more localized outreach; sharing data on the challenges police units currently face in responding to nonviolent crises, as well as potential changes in protocol; producing public-facing reports detailing the quantity and category of cases such nonviolent crisis intervention responders dealt with, in addition to policies during response.

### FROM OTHER CITIES:<sup>25</sup>

We begin this section acknowledging the unique nuances of every city. Given the particularities of each city's leadership structure, budgetary allocation, state regulations, internal politics, and communal history, it is impossible to craft an one-size-fits-all solution that is directly transferable from one city to another city.

With that being said, while the feasibilities and practicalities of different recommendations may vary, there is still much benefit in studying the innovative, imaginative work other cities are doing. The following recommendations have been curated to include cities that are roughly similar in size and population to Birmingham, and have or will be pursuing initiatives with resources that are roughly analogous. We recommend reading the following city examples not only for the specific recommendations, and the potential ways to apply it to Birmingham, but with a broader spirit of what can be pushed even further, and done even better.

### On Creating an Alternate Method to Issue Traffic Citations — Berkeley, CA<sup>26</sup>

Most minor traffic infractions are dealt with via speed and red-light cameras on high-injury streets throughout the city — with a shift from issuing fines to community service as a restitution for lower-income earners.

In addition, there is the creation of a separate “BerkDOT” department with officers who are unsworn, unarmed, and separate from the PD for when the cause simply needs an invocation of awareness (i.e., a taillight that is out).

The role of the unarmed officer here is simply to pull over drivers to inform them. There is no vehicle search or armed presence. Helps focus PD resources on more important elements and creates a more positive interaction for the average citizen, away from the PD itself.

<sup>16</sup> Robinson LO. Five Years after Ferguson: Reflecting on Police Reform and What's Ahead. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 2020;687(1):228-239

<sup>17</sup> “How Recommendations Of An Obama Task Force Have, And Haven't, Changed U.S. Policing” [https://wbhm.org/npr\\_story\\_post/2020/how-recommendations-of-an-obama-task-force-have-and-havent-changed-u-s-policing/](https://wbhm.org/npr_story_post/2020/how-recommendations-of-an-obama-task-force-have-and-havent-changed-u-s-policing/)

<sup>18</sup> Presidential Task Force, Pillar 1.6.1

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Pillar 1.2

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Pillar 4.1.1

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Pillar 4.4

<sup>22</sup> “Why Are Police the Wrong Response to Mental Health Crises” <https://www.aclu.org/news/criminal-law-reform/why-are-police-the-wrong-response-to-mental-health-crises/>

<sup>23</sup> “Mental Health and Police Violence — How Crisis Intervention Teams are Failing” <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/18/913229469/mental-health-and-police-violence-how-crisis-intervention-teams-are-failing>

<sup>24</sup> Watson AC, Fulambarker AJ. The Crisis Intervention Team Model of Police Response to Mental Health Crises: A Primer for Mental Health Practitioners. Best Pract Ment Health. 2012;8(2):71.

<sup>25</sup> Further analysis and examples of some of the recommendations listed here can be found at the Center for American Progress: Assessing the State of Police Reform report <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/criminal-justice/news/2020/07/16/487721/assessing-state-police-reform/>

<sup>26</sup> “Berkeley's Bold Vision for the Future of Policing” <https://www.sfchronicle.com/culture/article/What-will-a-traffic-stop-in-Berkeley-look-like-15482873.php>

**On Creating a Civilian Public Safety Branch Dispatch — Albuquerque, NM<sup>27</sup>**

Under the “Albuquerque Community Safety Department” (ACS),<sup>28</sup> the City has founded a civilian public safety branch focused on dispatching trained professionals instead of armed police officers to nonviolent 911 calls.

This system includes calls involving mental health issues, addiction, and homelessness and serves as a third option for 911 dispatch, alongside APD (Albuquerque Police Department) and AFR (Albuquerque Fire Rescue).

The Albuquerque Community Safety Department was a larger initiative developed after extensive testing within the community. The ACS operates on a public health model that has a civilian-led response; emphasizing the core job description of officers as ‘guardians’ and shifting more broadly to a public health approach to poverty and trauma.<sup>29</sup>

**On Transparency through Public Quarterly Reports — Richmond, VA<sup>30</sup>**

A public quarterly report system instituted by the police chief in the City of Richmond, Virginia. The report is gathered and presented by the chief: during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the presentations are being given on schedule through virtual means.

**On Community Unity through Building a Communal Infrastructure of Involvement — Salt Lake City, UT<sup>31</sup>**

Salt Lake City PD’s website has a “Hello Neighbor” program with forms for people to download, fill out, and return to offer neighborly services during the pandemic such as picking up medication, pick up/deliver food, help with childcare, and so on. This is intended to push back against communal feelings of frustrations, arguments, and abandonment.

The site states the ways to use the form: “Get to know your neighbors and collect their contact information; if needed, you want to be able to call, text, or email them. Find out how you might be able to help should a situation arise. Use this form to begin a conversation and to let them know you might be able to assist.”

The focus of the project more broadly is within connecting residents more closely with each other to build a stronger sense of community, and thus, security. Such initiatives are particularly notable in the level of their need during a global pandemic where quarantining is normal.

**On Transparency Through Website Design — Salt Lake City, UT**

Salt Lake City PD is notable for its website design in a way that emblazons the principles they seek to embody. In this vein, the transparency section lies front and center. It then leads to a page with clearly stated measures for use of force (including a link to details for the PD), accountability details, types of training, and ongoing established community relationships.

Being intentional and strategic about website design to ensure the principles of institutions are clearly conveyed is vital. Steps to embody this include creating a transparency section that is easily accessed; have it include clear information on use of force, accountability commitments and expectations, and so on. Public report updates as well as any news on accountability systems should be similarly designed to be clearly visible and easily accessible.

**On Building Community Unity Through Meaningful Community Group Relationship Sessions — Salt Lake City, UT<sup>32</sup>**

Focus on building authentic roots and deep listening within the community through institutionalization of such listening sessions in one cemented body. The body built is the Community Advocates Group (CAG), which has met regularly for the past three years.

Members span a spectrum of positions and backgrounds. They include: Utah Against Police Brutality, Black Lives Matter, Coalition for Police Reform, and family members of people who have been killed in police encounters.

Additionally, there is the presence of the Community Advisory Board (CAB) — composed of various Salt Lake City residents. It has met every other month for the past three years to provide input on policies, community concerns, and give advice to the Chief of the Police.

Both the CAG and CAB are examples of how useful mechanisms, such as listening sessions and community feedback, can be crystalized into a particular set body rather than a one-off action that happens in response to a particular event. This high level of institutionalization permits the longevity of these mechanisms regardless of circumstance; helps build authentic, lasting relationships between government and citizens; and exposes both sides to ideas in a consistent, concentrated way. For particularly difficult or extensive conversations, an outside facilitator is also recommended to be present for such occurrences.

**On Former Offender Reentry and Transitioning Back into Society**

In keeping with desires to reduce recidivism rates, which would help decrease prison/jail overcrowding, and in line with a crucial component of the listening session for former offenders, it is highly recommended that the reentry program for transitioning from prison back into society is looked into and that adjustments are made for the benefit of those utilizing it. Specifically, resources should be provided to ensure adequate housing, clothing, meals, employment, attaining identification, transportation, and such; that the classes currently offered provide information pertinent to attendees; and that investigations are done to ensure no illegal activities are happening by the former offenders or the probation officers, housing providers, or those entrusted to provide services to said former offenders.

It is also recommended that a variety of support systems be considered. It is not looked at favorably, or may be illegal, for former offenders to interact with others with a criminal record. However, those who have made successful strides transitioning back into society are likely among the best candidates to serve as mentors to support and guide newly released offenders by offering advice ranging from the most helpful avenues and services to which pitfalls to avoid. Ideas for best efforts upon release in the areas of basic needs, support systems, healthcare, and more are found in this successful reentry guide for corrections, community groups, and service providers created by the Urban Institute Justice Policy Center.

Reentry efforts may likely be all the more exacerbated due to COVID-19, and as such, guidelines to consider are found here in New York University’s recommendations for rapid release and reentry during the pandemic.

**III. Further Data to Collect**

Collecting consistent data is central to ensuring incentivization structures are thriving, as well as further refining many of these proposed community empowerment institutionalized bodies. In general, the mechanistic processes through which data is collected should be cemented — key staff that are responsible for the collection and analyses of such data, proper allocation of resources to sift through the data, and so on.

Beyond the actual mechanistic processes, particular key areas of focus to collect data include from any bodies that may provide critical feedback that is used in incentivization structures. This spans general citizens, CPO/CSO, community liaisons, and any other civic organizations. As in data collection, establishing some sort of routine when interfacing with such bodies — whether quarterly, bi-yearly, or yearly, depending on the size of the body surveyed, resources available, and priority — is a powerful tool to ensure there is both accountability, and a clear standardization to the process.

<sup>27</sup> “Mayor Keller Announces Creation of Albuquerque Community Safety Department” <https://www.kob.com/albuquerque-news/mayor-keller-announces-creation-of-albuquerque-community-safety-department/5760086/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.cabq.gov/acs>

<sup>29</sup> Infographic with full descriptions of program here: <https://www.cabq.gov/acs/documents/acs-graphic.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.richmondgov.com/police/>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.slcpd.com/hello/>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.slcpd.com/transparency/>

PILLAR #2:

POLICY & OVERSIGHT

I. Scope of the Problem

Policy issues are dynamic and multifaceted; to that end, the policy and oversight recommendations were guided not be static issues but the following key questions:

- Does this policy expand and/or better coordinate City dollars focused on public safety?
- Does this policy expand our understanding of public safety to explicitly include public health, social services, courts, and key intergovernmental partners (e.g., HABD, BCS, etc.)?
- Do policies concerning police tools, tactics, and technologies uphold standards of civil liberties/constitutional rights?
- Does this policy promote the highest and best use of police resources?
- What data is being collected?

II. Summary of Recommendations

CREATE A ROBUST DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

One of the most important things the City of Birmingham can do to augment public safety and trust is establishing a robust program to collect, analyze, and report police data. The City of Birmingham's current system for data collection and reporting is outdated and lacking in transparency, which only serves to worsen outcomes for Birmingham's police officers and residents alike.

In 2018, as part of his "Report and Recommendations on Birmingham, Alabama Police Department's Crime Analysis Capabilities," consultant Christopher Bruce recommended the following:<sup>33</sup>

1. Reorganize the existing crime analyst and Intelligence Unit into a combined Crime and Intelligence Analysis Unit, with the currently separate crime analyst brought into the same structure and chain of command with the existing intelligence analysts. Literature and best practice have repeatedly shown that there is little benefit to keeping these functions separated at a municipal level.
2. Hire at least four civilian crime analysts as soon as practical, assigning the new positions to each of the agency's four districts.
3. Work with the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) department to obtain GIS licenses for each of the analysts.
4. Purchase link analysis software licenses for anyone performing analysis of criminal organizations.
5. Contract with the International Association of Crime Analysts (IACA) for a tactical crime analysis course for the region as soon as possible and a crime mapping course as soon as the analysts have GIS systems.
6. Commission a week of direct technical assistance from an experienced crime analyst to help the unit develop a comprehensive data management structure, integrate GIS, and implement processes for activities like regular hot spot analysis and threshold analysis.
7. Consider a site visit to agencies of similar size and composition with longer-standing crime analysis functions. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina Police Department would perhaps be ideal, but the agency could probably learn something from the Metropolitan Nashville, Tennessee Police Department's approach to hot spot policing, the Little Rock, Arkansas Police Department's use of crime analysis in its districts, and the data backbone recently developed by the New Orleans, Louisiana Police Department.
8. Expand the scope and content of the "shooting meeting" which could easily expand to encompass violent crimes as a whole, with a focus on the "4 Ps" as discussed in the crime analysis workshop: repeat and active offenders, hot spots, short-term patterns, and long-term problems.

9. Hold the IMPACT meeting every two weeks instead of once a month.
10. Implement regular threshold analysis. This technique uses automated systems to help flag police beats experiencing sudden spikes in activity.
11. Reinvest in focused deterrence.
12. Someone from the executive level, ideally the chief or deputy chief, should conduct an evaluation of the budgeting and technology acquisition processes of the agency and deal with individual unit concerns that their procurements are being unfairly blocked by inexplicable, behind-the-scenes processes.
13. Develop a pilot hot spot policing program.

In 2018, the National Public Safety Partnership's Technology Assessment Report also provided recommendations for Birmingham Police Department's technology infrastructure, which need to be implemented in order to facilitate increased data capabilities.<sup>34</sup>

1. Conduct a full review of hardware, server, storage, and PC needs, and consider including a recurring budget line item to properly maintain critical hardware and systems infrastructure.
2. Consider keeping PCs, spare hard drives, and other consumables in reserve (standard is 10% in inventory) to provide proper infrastructure and desktop support.
3. Work with the City of Birmingham and Information Management Systems (IMS) to ensure critical public safety needs are prioritized and that unique operational requirements can be met.
4. Request that IMS conduct a network analysis to determine whether network speed can be improved.
5. Conduct a review of the security on BPD's server and equipment rooms and work with the appropriate City resources to ensure proper security.
6. Acquire Birmingham Police Department Police Technolgy Department access to assign profiles to handhelds, add new radios for recruits, and pull old radios off the system as needed. The City should also look into putting a support contract in place for these services.
7. Install Mobile Data Computers (MDCs) in all marked vehicles.
8. Consider bringing on a vendor or contractors to perform the installation of MDCs. This will help to ensure their speedy installation.
9. Consider installing MDCs in supervisors' vehicles to enable supervisors to begin reports in the field.
10. Consider allowing officers to utilize an MDC, or potentially a tablet, when waiting in a hospital or in court, so they can spend the wait time completing reports and other tasking.
11. Obtain administrator access for BPD PTD to Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD)/Record Managment System (RMS) so staff can provide the vendor access to the system for trouble-shooting, maintenance, and support.
12. Consider adding staff to perform system configuration and testing during upgrades and provide daily CAD/RMS user support (e.g., password resets, user errors, etc.)
13. Provide refresher training to existing RMS users in both how to use the system and how to record crime pursuant to National Incidence-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).
14. Consider integration with the State so that citation data can also be fed into the BPD RMS.
15. Consider implementing a Quality Assurance (QA) group over crime reporting to ensure adherence to NIBRS.
16. Consider reviewing the entire system configuration in detail, during the upcoming RMS upgrade, to eliminate the ability for users to enter conflicting or "dirty" data. This should then be vetted carefully during the upgrade testing process.
17. Review all reporting capabilities and requirements and work with the vendor to ensure all requirements are met during the upcoming RMS upgrade.
18. Implement long-term storage immediately.
19. Install in-car video in all marked BPD cars.

<sup>33</sup> Bruce, C. (2018). Report and Recommendations on Birmingham, Alabama Police Department's Crime Analysis Capabilities

<sup>34</sup> Technology Assessment Report (2018). In National Public Safety Partnership



20. Work with City IMS to calculate and plan for long-term storage needs approximately 120 to 180 days after implementation.
21. Work with prosecutors to develop a business process for formally accepting “share links” from BPD and storing the related video and metadata.
22. Provide officers with a platform to upload photos from the pooled cameras from the stations, or deploy a mobile application that allows photos to be uploaded from a mobile device to the cloud storage where body camera video is stored.
23. Consider installing a dedicated personal computer in roll-call rooms to enable roll-call training and aid in the distribution of critical information during roll call.
24. Deploy decision-support software so patrol leadership can employ data-driven decision-making, conduct analysis, and have better situational awareness.
25. Develop a focused training effort for the deployment of any decision-support software.
26. Consider providing additional forensics storage, hardware, and software, and update its cellphone evidence-recovery system.
27. Consider providing additional training for its Forensics Unit.
28. Consider deploying (1) laptops or tablets for on-call detectives to type search warrants, as well as to take to scenes to complete reports, and (2) cellular “hot spots” from a second carrier when there is no coverage in certain areas of the city for BPD's existing cellular carrier.
29. Consider providing access to technology and resources that would provide detectives with additional data to aid in investigations, such as access to surveillance cameras and license plate recognition systems.
30. Consider providing equipment, resources, and training to detectives to pull digital evidence from cellphones and computers, so detectives only request the limited resources of the Forensics Unit for more complex cases.
31. Engage with other law enforcement agencies in the region to determine the possibility of establishing a regional information-sharing platform.
32. The City should consider identifying a dedicated police IT support group within IMS that will be on call 24/7 to support police operations, and clearly define the difference between IMS and PTD roles and responsibilities. Police technology needs should be considered for prioritization over other needs that may not directly impact public safety and mission-critical operations. As an alternative, PTD could take ownership of frontline support of most BPD systems, but would need additional staffing and resources to do so.
33. Consider requesting funding to staff a dedicated BPD IT helpdesk to support its users.
34. Consider hiring a civilian IT professional to run BPD PTD.

Beyond the recommendations set forth by the National Public Safety Partnership and consultant Christopher Bruce, which would establish a robust system for the collection and reporting of data if implemented, there are a variety of other important uses for data:

1. For pretextual stops, BPD should track race, gender, and whether the stop led to prosecution.
2. Map the crime in a given area in an easy-to-use, publicly viewable dashboard as the cities of New Orleans<sup>35</sup> and Seattle<sup>36</sup> have done.
3. Participate in the Police Data Initiative<sup>37</sup> which was spurred by President Obama's task force on 21st Century Policing. 130 municipalities are now actively engaged.
4. Investigate how police department staff allocate their time, as the cities of Sacramento and New Orleans<sup>38</sup> have done.
5. Create quarterly crime and complaint reports for review by department leaders.
6. Regularly publish data on complaints filed against police officers.

<sup>35</sup> “City of New Orleans.” Crime Mapping, [www.crimemapping.com/map/la/neworlean](http://www.crimemapping.com/map/la/neworlean)

<sup>36</sup> “Crime Dashboard.” City of Seattle, [www.seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/online-crime-maps](http://www.seattle.gov/police/information-and-data/online-crime-maps)

<sup>37</sup> Police Data Initiative, [www.policedatainitiative.org/](http://www.policedatainitiative.org/)

<sup>38</sup> “How Do the Police Actually Spend Their Time?” New York Times, 19 June 2020, [www.nytimes.com/2020/06/19/upshot/unrest-police-time-violent-crime.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/19/upshot/unrest-police-time-violent-crime.html)

7. Create an early detection system by closely monitoring officers who make a disproportionate number of stops of people of color, women, transgender people, gender nonconforming people, and people experiencing homelessness.
8. Monitor unauthorized detours while transporting detainees.
9. Publish data on accusations of officer sexual assault and harassment annually.
10. Consider utilizing the Justice Mapping Center's<sup>39</sup> audit feature which has an “updateable, online, fully visualized and interactive, data-driven account of the operations, resources, and governance of criminal justice agencies from crime and policing through prosecution and court adjudication to detention and sentencing... The Justice Audit incorporates not only big data from government agencies, but also intertwines results of a public opinion survey and practitioner interviews. It is designed to be updated annually, ensuring that crucial analyses are systematically reproduced each year and that stakeholders can track progress against goals over time.”
11. BPD's future data analysts should geocode their public data of the addresses where police stops occur, then merge it with the American Community Survey<sup>40</sup> (ACS) and data from Opportunity Insights<sup>41</sup> (OI). In its five-year detailed tables, the ACS has estimates of median income on the block group level. In its datasets titled “All Outcomes by Census Tract, Race, Gender and Parental Income Percentile” and “Neighborhood Characteristics by Census Tract,” OI has data on intergenerational mobility and neighborhood characteristics, such as poverty, employment rates, incarceration rates, and many more. These data sets can help answer questions like “Is BPD systematically making more stops in neighborhoods that are financially poorer and have lower economic mobility?” This can help determine what specific, neighborhood-level resources the City should invest in on the front end to prevent police interactions.

In recognition of the substantial costs associated with the above frameworks for augmenting data collection and reporting, there are also some philanthropic resources that would add to the City of Birmingham's data capacity without necessitating the hiring of additional full-time staff. For example, the Code For America Fellowship pairs community members with local government to address inequities in service delivery.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, there could be opportunities to partner with the University of Alabama's Birmingham CyberCorps program, which is a National Science Foundation funded scholarship program to address the growing need for a well-trained cybersecurity workforce via a partnership between the University's Computer Science and Criminal Justice departments. If a partnership were established, it could help Birmingham build a strong pipeline of data analysts that have local knowledge and experience.<sup>43</sup>

## ESTABLISH A CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT BOARD

Community oversight is a form of citizen participation in which a committee of residents reviews police misconduct accusations with the goals of: increasing transparency and accountability, engaging the community, improving public trust and legitimacy, and demystifying police internal affairs. In addition to these benefits, local civilian oversight boards are preferable alternatives to federal investigations and scrutiny because they prioritize local authority and preferences.<sup>44</sup>

Although there are many potential models of civilian oversight, as demonstrated by the dozens of American cities that have employed oversight committees, the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement recommends the following three basic structures that can be tailored to fit the needs of the City of Birmingham:

### Investigatory Systems

These oversight systems conduct investigations; they do not rely on investigators or investigations from within the police department. The role of investigatory systems is to:

1. Conduct interviews of witnesses, including civilians, and police officers.

<sup>39</sup> Justice Mapping Center, [www.justicemapping.org/](http://www.justicemapping.org/).

<sup>40</sup> “American Community Survey Data.” United States Census Bureau, [data.census.gov/cedsci/](http://data.census.gov/cedsci/).

<sup>41</sup> “Data Library.” Opportunity Insights, [opportunityinsights.org/data/](http://opportunityinsights.org/data/)

<sup>42</sup> Code for America Fellowship (n.d.). In Code for America. Retrieved from <https://www.codeforamerica.org/programs/fellowship>

<sup>43</sup> UAB CyberCorps. Retrieved from <https://sites.uab.edu/cybercorps/>

<sup>44</sup> Hendrickson, K. (n.d.). The Conservative Case for Civilian Review. In The American. Retrieved from <https://web.archive.org/web/20160429025546/https://www.aei.org/publication/the-conservative-case-for-civilian-review/>

2. Gather evidence.
3. Prepare investigative reports.
4. Make recommendations as to whether the evidence supports the allegations raised in the complaint.
5. Recommend disciplinary action when warranted.

Employing these systems helps to rebuild the trust of the community. It addresses the concern that internal police investigations, which are often perceived as biased in favor of the police, are the only recourse available to a complainant.

However, it's also worth noting that these systems add to the number of staff and agency costs. Moreover, police departments and police unions may be resistant to having non-police investigators conducting investigations.

### Review Systems

These systems involve an individual or a board/commission that is authorized to review completed internal affairs investigations. They can often issue agreement or disagreement with internal affairs findings, and they are usually allowed to review only cases that are investigated by the police. The role of review systems is to:

1. Review completed investigations and provide feedback. This can be done by professional staff or by volunteer board members.
2. Require additional investigation to be conducted if it is determined that the initial investigation was incomplete or otherwise inadequate.
3. Hold public meetings as necessary.

Employing these systems provides a high level of transparency and facilitates involvement with the community. Additionally, police departments may be more likely to take action on recommendations that are made by a public board.

However, these systems sometimes lack sufficient power to be effective, especially when limited in the number and type of cases that can be reviewed. Moreover, since these systems rely upon the substantial volunteer time commitment of board members, many volunteer trainings are required. This can become costly.

### Monitor and Audit Systems

The actors in these systems are most commonly referred to as “auditors,” “monitors,” or “ombudsmen.” These systems tend to have an ongoing monitoring or auditing authority over the police department. The oversight agency may actively engage in many or all of the steps of an established complaint process. The role of monitoring and auditing systems is to:

1. Receive and classify complaints.
2. Provide input on the investigative process, including planning, interviewing, and evidence collecting.
3. Conduct systematic investigations.
4. Assess compliance with police department policies as well as relevant state and federal law.
5. Evaluate the integrity and effectiveness of the police agency's accountability systems.
6. Craft analytical, empirical reports and audits.

These systems allow for identification of issues in regard to how complaints are handled from start to finish. They also facilitate identification of systemic issues with police training, policies, and supervision. Since these systems act as early warning and discipline systems, they help to rebuild the trust of the community. These systems are also more likely to have their policy recommendations actually put into practice. However, this may be largely due to the fact that auditor systems are more likely to have specialized staff, who focus on analyzing patterns in complaints and other police data, and subsequently issue specific recommendations based on such data.<sup>45</sup>

It's worth noting that these systems require extensive data collection and analysis capabilities, which the City of Birmingham presently lacks.

<sup>45</sup> Guidebook for the Implementation of New or Revitalized Police Oversight (n.d.). In National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement. Retrieved from [https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/nacole/pages/161/attachments/original/1597686953/Guidebook\\_for\\_the\\_Implementation\\_of\\_New\\_or\\_Revitalized\\_Police\\_Oversight\\_2016\\_FINAL.pdf?1597686953](https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/nacole/pages/161/attachments/original/1597686953/Guidebook_for_the_Implementation_of_New_or_Revitalized_Police_Oversight_2016_FINAL.pdf?1597686953)

### Policy and Process Advisory Systems

Policy and process advisory systems are those that help to shape or manage policy, advise the head of the law enforcement agency, or participate in the law enforcement executive and line-officer hiring processes. The role of policy and process systems is to:

1. Consult with decision makers inside the police department.
2. Evaluate the police department's needs and conduct best practices research.
3. Draft legislation and position papers.

These systems may result in expedient policy change, particularly when supported by the community and may often be less costly than systems that investigate and/or review individual complaints.

The downside of this model is that it relies more on the expertise and credibility of an established oversight practitioner, rather than the lived experience of community members. Moreover, the efficacy of this model depends on the stability of the head of the law enforcement agency, who may not be reelected or reappointed.

### Hybrid Model<sup>46</sup>

As the City of Seattle has demonstrated with their civilian oversight process, it's possible to create a hybrid model which employs components from multiple models recommended by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement. Seattle's model includes the following components:

1. The *Community Police Coalition* serves to review and provide input on the police accountability system, police services, and Seattle Police Department's policies and practices. The Community Police Coalition is completely independent from the Mayor and Police Department.
2. The *Office of Police Accountability* is a combination of police officers and civilian participants that investigate allegations of police misconduct. It is operationally outside of the Police Department, but administratively within the Police Department to encourage easy access to police documents and data.
3. The *Office of Inspector General* is an entirely civilian agency that serves as an independent auditor of the Police Department and the Office of Police Accountability.

Regardless of which model is ultimately employed, the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement recommends creating a system with the following characteristics to ensure efficacy: independence, adequate jurisdictional authority, unfettered access to records, full cooperation, access to law enforcement executives and internal affairs staff, support of process stakeholders, adequate resources, public reporting and transparency, use of statistical pattern analysis, community outreach, community involvement, and respect for confidentiality.

As the City of Birmingham begins formulating the structure of their own oversight model, it's important to assess the potential barriers the City may face. For example, Newark's Civilian Complaint Review Board, which was originally granted significant disciplinary powers, has faced legal challenges<sup>47</sup> from Newark's police union. Ultimately, the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that Newark's Civilian Complaint Review Board cannot have subpoena power and cannot exercise its investigatory powers when a concurrent investigation is conducted by the police department's Internal Affairs unit.

Moreover, because models of civilian oversight of the police are relatively new, there is little, if any, empirical research on the effectiveness of these models — nor are the programs subjected to any systematic evaluation.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Civilian Oversight (n.d.). In City of Seattle. Retrieved from <http://www.seattle.gov/civilian-oversight>

<sup>47</sup> Newark Civilian Review Board (2020, April 27). In ACLU- NJ. Retrieved from <https://www.aclu-nj.org/news/2020/04/27/oral-argument-nj-supreme-court-will-decide-newark-civilian-r>

<sup>48</sup> Civilian Oversight of Police in Major Cities (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-w0861-pub.pdf>

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Outside of creating a robust program to analyze data and establishing civilian oversight boards, the following practices are also recommended:

- 1. Department leaders should review data quarterly to identify issues with policing practices.
- 2. Make sure that complaint forms are easily accessible online, over the phone, by mail, and in person. These forms should be made available in multiple languages.
- 3. Establish early intervention systems to track unlawful officer behavior.
- 4. Establish duty to intervene and duty to report policies.
- 5. Include non-law enforcement staff on investigatory panels.
- 6. Regularly publish data on complaints filed against police officers.
- 7. Police policies should be published in an extremely accessible format.
- 8. Prohibit officers from watching body cam footage before filing reports.
- 9. Closely monitor officers who make disproportionate numbers of stops of people of color, women, transgender people, gender nonconforming people, and people experiencing homelessness.
- 10. Monitor unauthorized detours while transporting detainees.
- 11. Publish data on accusations of assault and harassment bi-annually.

POLICE EDUCATION:

Two-year degree or 64 college credits in related disciplines (sociology, psychology, criminal justice, theology, etc.) should be required before entering the police academy. We recommend to the Jefferson County Personnel Board that they expand the qualifications and academic requirements to capture the diversity of the community without compromising the competence or judgment that the community is entitled to expect from their police officers.

- Provisional or modified position to come in without 2-year degree, but must get 2-year degree within 2 years
- Sergeant – Must have 2-year degree
- Lieutenant – 84 college credits
- Captain – 4-year degree

III. Further Data to Collect

Criminal justice agency governance and oversight (including police complaint mechanisms, judicial review boards, jail and prison inspections, etc.)

- Neighborhood sentiments regarding policing, access to justice, satisfaction, expectations of justice, safety, fear, etc.
- Neighborhood sentiments regarding most important elements of justice (formal v informal, prevention, mitigation, enforcement, procedural justice, etc.)
- Neighborhood sentiments regarding attitudes toward disorder (including 311 calls), property, and violence (including 911 calls)
- Neighborhood sentiments regarding most urgent issues of injustice
- Geographic distributions of community safety association activities (block associations, neighborhood watch groups, etc.)
- Geographic distributions of violence prevention and mitigation programs (such as Cure Violence, etc.)
- Geographic index of anti-criminogenic mobility networks (work, education, behavioral, and physical health)

Institutional data among police, prosecution, legal aid, courts, community corrections, institutional corrections, including operational, resource, and oversight dimensions

- Practitioner survey data among institutional personnel regarding perspectives on operational efficiency, population profile appropriateness, job challenges, and work environment
- Court user survey regarding accessibility, justice, and satisfaction
- Departments of Labor (including TANF and SNAP), Health (including hospital emergency room visits and Medicaid usage), Education (including middle and high school suspensions and expulsions, post-secondary enrollment and funding, etc.), and Housing (including evictions, shelter use, and section 8) services
- 311 calls
- 911 calls
- City Planning (including residential occupancy, transportation and commuting, environmental hazards, nutritional brownfields, etc.)

Source: Justice & Governance Partnership, The Aspen Institute - Washington D.C., 10.20.2020



PILLAR #3:

TRAINING & EDUCATION

I. Scope of the Problem

The sociological concept of “trained incapacity” holds that “one’s abilities function as inadequacies or blind spots.” It means that “people’s past experiences can lead to wrong decisions when circumstances change.” The same might be said of training and educating police in the 21st century. Equipping law enforcement officers with the knowledge, skills, mindsets, and relationships they need to be more effective in maintaining justice and peace in Birmingham will take significant time and attention toward how these officers are trained and educated.

With regard to training and education, there was a push by the federal government under President Obama to develop partnerships with training facilities across the country to promote consistent standards. The final report of the President’s task force on 21st Century Policing also recommended the establishment of “training innovation hubs involving universities and police academies” and a “national postgraduate institute of policing for senior executives... with a standardized curriculum.” These institutions would support the overarching objective of providing high-quality training for officers to be better partners with community members and to be “capable to address a wide variety of challenges, including international terrorism, evolving technologies, rising immigration, changing laws, new cultural mores, and a growing mental health crisis.”

The Birmingham Police Department has several opportunities to implement these training and education recommendations within its current structure, including additional updates to officer standards and hiring practices through the Jefferson County Personnel Board. The goal with any changes is to cohesively center police training and education around all people’s physical and virtual spaces, as well as to improve overall decision-making on how these spaces are safeguarded by law enforcement.

II. Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Use and build upon the Final Report of the President's task force on 21st Century Policing as a guide.

A number of recommendations were included in the task force’s report, though most are under the purview of the federal Department of Justice. A current list of available DOJ training and technical assistance can be located here. Interpreting the task force’s education and training recommendations, there are steps that can be taken or pursued by Birmingham:

- 1. Partner with local educational institutions to engage community members in the law enforcement training process.
- 2. Provide ongoing leadership training for senior law enforcement officers to build the knowledge, skills, and mindsets necessary to be more effective in the community.
- 3. Ensure Crisis Intervention Training as part of basic officer training.
- 4. Updating basic training curriculum to include:
  - a. The history of policing and the history of policing in Birmingham
  - b. Social interaction & tactical skills
  - c. Drug abuse and addiction as a disease
  - d. Elections and law enforcement
  - e. Implicit bias and cultural responsiveness, specifically for people of color, women, gender nonconforming people, LGBTQ people, youth, undocumented immigrants, people with limited English proficiency, people with disabilities, religious and ethnic groups, low-income people, people experiencing homelessness, and other groups
  - f. Basic legal education, particularly lawful search, seizure, and arrest statutes/protocol
  - g. Communicating effectively with people who have limited English proficiency (LEP), who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who have other disabilities that affect communication
  - h. Policing in a democratic society

It is also recommended that law enforcement officers are required and/or recommended and incentivized to pursue higher education. Incentives include loan repayment or forgiveness program for training and further education (See Recommendation #4 for further details).

Recommendation #2: Update the Birmingham Police Department's pedagogical approach to adult learning.

Whenever possible, Birmingham Police Department should organize trainings according to educational best practices. This will serve to maximize the impact that trainings have on long-term knowledge retention and implementation.

For instance, it is well known that learning is more effective when instruction occurs in spaced intervals as opposed to one large unit.<sup>49,50</sup> Training programs utilizing mass instruction (entire training occurs over a short period of time) have lower long-term retention and produce less practice integration than training programs which occur in smaller chunks over a longer time period.<sup>51,52,53,54</sup> Accordingly, BPD instruction and trainings may have the greatest impact if the material is presented monthly in 1-hour sessions instead of one day-long session.

Recommendation #3: Redesign use-of-force training

A concentrated effort to educate and train law enforcement officers and officials on use-of-force techniques is of particular interest to the City of Birmingham. This will help ensure that respecting and protecting human life is prioritized. It will provide all officers with the training they need to mitigate uses of force and use the least amount of force necessary. It will limit the use of force against vulnerable populations, which will engender greater trust and social cohesion in the community. A new use-of-force training should also examine limitations on instruments and establish a duty to intervene and provide medical assistance. Finally, stronger reporting requirements should be an integral part of a new use-of-force policy for the Birmingham Police Department.

Recommendation #4: Raising officer standards and augmenting hiring practices through the Jefferson County Personnel Board

In partnership with the Jefferson County Personnel Board, a number of officer standards or hiring practices can be implemented to improve public safety:

- 1. Residency Requirements:

Chicago, Denver, and dozens of other cities require police officers to live within their municipal boundaries. Officers who are from the community often will have more insights and perspectives about the community. And hiring from the community strengthens the community by providing opportunities for professional growth among residents, in particular young people. Both of these benefits can strengthen critical bonds of trust between police and residents. It is recommended that police cadet programs are established or expanded as a way to bring greater numbers of local residents into their organizations and to promote diversity and community knowledge within the recruit officer ranks.
- 2. Education Requirements:

As stated above, it is highly recommended that the Birmingham Police Department institute a requirement or

<sup>49</sup> Litman, L., & Davachi, L. (2008). Distributed learning enhances relational memory consolidation. *Learning & Memory*, 15(9), 711–716. <https://doi.org/10.1101/lm.1132008>

<sup>50</sup> Carpenter, S. K., Cepeda, N. J., Rohrer, D., Kang, S. H. K., & Pashler, H. (2012). Using Spacing to Enhance Diverse Forms of Learning: Review of Recent Research and Implications for Instruction. *Educational Psychology Review*, 24(3), 369–378. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-012-9205-z>

<sup>51</sup> Rischke, A. E., Roberts, K. P., & Price, H. L. (2010). Using Spaced Learning Principles to Translate Knowledge into Behavior: Evidence from Investigative Interviews of Alleged Child Abuse Victims. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology*, 26(1), 58–67. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-010-9073-8>

<sup>52</sup> Yeh, D. D., & Park, Y. S. (2015). Improving Learning Efficiency of Factual Knowledge in Medical Education. *Journal of Surgical Education*, 72(5), 882–889. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsurg.2015.03.012>

<sup>53</sup> Kerfoot, B. P., Fu, Y., Baker, H., Connelly, D., Ritchey, M. L., & Genega, E. M. (2010). Online Spaced Education Generates Transfer and Improves Long-Term Retention of Diagnostic Skills: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*, 211(3). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jamcollsurg.2010.04.023>

<sup>54</sup> Patocka, C., Cheng, A., Sibbald, M., Duff, J., Lai, A., Lee-Nobbee, P., ... Bhanji, F. (2018). LO38: Does spaced instructional design result in improved retention of pediatric resuscitation skills? A randomized education study. *Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 20(S1). <https://doi.org/10.1017/cem.2018.100>

recommendation (with incentives) to ensure law enforcement officers pursue post-secondary credentials. By 2013, 15% of police departments required officers to have some form of college education, most commonly a two-year degree. Miami Beach recently added a four-year degree requirement. A 2010 study for the Police Quarterly shows that in encounters with crime suspects, officers with some college education or a four-year degree resorted to using force 56% of the time, while officers with no college education used force 68% of the time. With the understanding that post-secondary credentials can be expensive, incentives can help ease the burden. States like Mississippi and Arizona have tuition reimbursement programs to incentivize officers to pursue college education.

3. Hiring More Women:

It is recommended that physical requirements for officer hiring are audited to ensure that women aren't disadvantaged in the hiring process. The National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE) said traditional standards that measure upper-body strength such as push-ups can have a disparate impact on female candidates. The City of Madison provides candidates with hands-on guidance on how to prepare for the state-mandated entry level test. Madison Police Captain Mary Schauf said this approach is helping the agency maintain its standards and achieve its diversity goals. "We just had a class that started Monday, and it is 43% women and 30% racially diverse," she reported. The Office for Civil Rights published a report in January 2016 which examined the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) and the Alabama Department of Public Safety (DPS). One of the areas that investigators focused on was officer selection practices, specifically whether any of the agencies' screening devices had the impact of improperly excluding female applicants from the process. The review concluded that in three years — 2009, 2011, and 2014 — the DPS "used a pre-offer physical agility and ability test to screen trooper applicants that adversely impacted females and that was neither sufficiently related to the trooper position nor consistent with business necessity."

4. Interview Process:

Some cities have expanded their oral interview process to focus more on community-oriented skills and capabilities. The City of Dallas conducts in-depth interviews with candidates that include questions about how they would handle various situations that an officer will likely encounter in the community. Candidates in Kalamazoo, Michigan are given scenario-based questions that address the City's "fair and impartial policing" approach and that touch on a variety of human experiences, as opposed to only the traditional roles of a police officer. In addition, candidates participate in ride-alongs with police officers that include interactions with a community-based group. Some candidates, such as those in Newport, VA are asked questions about potential implicit bias as part of their standard interview process. The City of Baltimore checks candidates' social media accounts for any indicators of explicit bias or warning signs.

5. Incentivize Community Service:

Give special consideration for candidates who have engaged in activities that support the characteristics and skills the agency is looking for. For example, candidates could earn points in the hiring process for community service or volunteer activities, in which they demonstrated the ability to work with diverse communities in different settings.

III. Further Data to Collect

As part of the specific education and training goals listed above, data to collect may include public data in alternative and accessible formats on department-wide uses of force, including: date, time, and geolocation of the incident; actual or perceived race, ethnicity, age, and gender of the people involved; reason for enforcement action; search conducted (if any) and if it was consensual; evidence located (if any); and name of officer(s) involved.

PILLAR #4:

SAFETY & WELLNESS

The City of Birmingham is committed to creating a safe community for all residents and reducing violence in our neighborhoods. More than that, the City strives to create an environment where all residents are able to thrive and reach their fullest potential. In order to adopt this broader view of safety and wellness, we draw upon the research and methods of public health. Through the three strategies described below, our approach fosters collaboration between law enforcement and social services while capitalizing on the unique strengths of each organization. Together, these three elements work along the spectrum of safety and wellness to prevent violence before it occurs, assist nonviolent community members in accessing the support they need, and foster a healthy law enforcement team that is poised to be of service.

Strategy #1: Apply an evidence-based public health approach to address the policy factors that facilitate violence and mass incarceration in our communities.

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM:

Public safety has been, perhaps mistakenly, seen as synonymous with criminal justice. As early as 1979, the Centers for Disease Control began to recognize issues traditionally associated with criminal justice and public safety as public health issues.<sup>55</sup> At the heart of the public health approach is science, identifying how public safety can be improved by strategically influencing the risk and protective factors that can in turn mitigate certain actions deemed criminal and antisocial. This approach not only prevents harm and injustice but also saves a significant amount in funding: "the cost of gun violence alone is...the overall U.S. estimate is \$460 billion, [6] including \$318 billion in lost productivity [7] and \$93.5 billion related to suicide alone[8]."<sup>56</sup>

Taking a public health approach, we can understand individual behaviors as the result of complex influences from an individual's social connections, the community organizations to which they belong, local norms, the physical environment, and public policies. For instance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies many contextual risk factors for violent behavior among youth, such as exposure to violence in the family, prior victimization, social rejection by peers, low parental socioeconomic status, and high levels of transiency in the community.<sup>57</sup> Multiple studies have even shown that gunshot violence is transmitted through social networks and follows an epidemic-like process similar to infectious diseases.<sup>58,59</sup>

Violence in our communities is not only detrimental to those who are directly victimized, but also has negative consequences for everyone who witnesses that behavior. For instance, research shows that exposure to community violence decreases social interactions in a community and increases loneliness.<sup>60</sup> This social isolation is both a key predictor of mortality<sup>61</sup> and a threat to the social cohesion required to build strong communities moving forward. Exposure to neighborhood violence

<sup>55</sup> (p. 2, Reprinted from: Dahlberg LL, Mercy JA. History of violence as a public health issue. AMA Virtual Mentor, February 2009. Volume 11, No. 2: 167-172. Available online at <http://virtualmentor.ama-assn.org/2009/02/mhst1-0902.html>.)

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2019/01/28/violence-is-a-public-health-issue>

<sup>57</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. (2020, March 2). Violence Prevention: Risk and Protective Factors. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

<sup>58</sup> Green, B., Horel, T., & Papachristos, A. V. (2017). Modeling Contagion Through Social Networks to Explain and Predict Gunshot Violence in Chicago, 2006 to 2014. JAMA Internal Medicine, 177(3), 326. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.8245>

<sup>59</sup> Papachristos, A. V., Wildeman, C., & Roberto, E. (2015). Tragic, but not random: The social contagion of nonfatal gunshot injuries. Social Science & Medicine, 125, 139–150. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.01.056>

<sup>60</sup> Tung, E. L., Hawkey, L. C., Cagney, K. A., & Peek, M. E. (2019). Social Isolation, Loneliness, And Violence Exposure In Urban Adults. Health Affairs, 38(10), 1670–1678. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2019.00563>

<sup>61</sup> Pantell M, Rehkopf D, Jutte D, Syme SL, Balmes J, Adler N. Social isolation: a predictor of mortality comparable to traditional clinical risk factors. Am J Public Health 2013;103(11):2056–62

also increases hypervigilance, a state of heightened awareness and watchfulness that has negative health consequences.<sup>62</sup>

The negative effects of neighborhood violence are not limited to violence perpetrated by community members. When acts of violence are committed by those sworn to protect and serve the community, the negative consequences soar. For instance, the hypervigilance resulting from exposure to neighborhood violence is more dramatic when that violence is perpetrated by police rather than community members.<sup>63</sup> Likewise, young Black men in New York City demonstrate increased trauma and anxiety symptoms when they have more frequent police contact, and these psychological effects are greater when stops are more frequent and more intrusive.<sup>64</sup> In similar studies, merely living in a neighborhood where pedestrian stops are more likely to become invasive was associated with worse health outcomes.<sup>65</sup> A landmark study even showed that Black and Hispanic high school students exposed to local officer-involved killings had persistent decreases in GPA, increased incidences of emotional disturbance, and lower rates of high school completion and college enrollment.<sup>66</sup> Today's police brutality is thus scarring Black and Hispanic youth for generations to come.

Luckily, the same public health approach that allows us to see the multifaceted ramifications of violence can also help us to imagine a way forward. Just as the CDC identified risk factors for violent behaviors among youth, they also identified many external factors that can contribute to resilience and positive behaviors. For instance, high educational achievement and aspiration, connectedness to family or other adults, consistent parental presence, and involvement in social activities<sup>67, 68</sup> all decrease the risk of violent behaviors among youth. In addition, local organizations have been shown to play a key role in the formal networks that create social cohesion and limit violence.<sup>69</sup> Although we prioritize law enforcement as the method to reducing serious crimes, one study found that establishing nonprofits focused on violence prevention and community strengthening had a substantively meaningful negative effect on murder, violent crime, and property crime.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, the social networks that are eroded by violence can be leveraged to prevent violence – violence prevention programs that consider social network effects have the power to prevent more gunshot events than efforts which only consider demographic factors.<sup>71, 72</sup>

Looking beyond neighborhood violence, we must also recognize and address the frequent interpersonal violence that is perpetuated behind closed doors. In the United States, nearly 1 in 3 women experience physical violence from an intimate partner during their lifetime<sup>73</sup> and about 35% of homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner.<sup>74</sup> In Alabama, 23% of all aggravated assaults reported in 2015 were domestic in nature. Unfortunately, this is not a problem unique to adults, and

sexual violence begins young, with 41% of all female victims of completed rape reporting that it first occurred prior to age 18.<sup>75</sup>

Lastly, a thorough understanding of violence in our community is not complete without acknowledging the harmful role of firearms. States with higher levels of firearm ownership, such as Alabama, have been shown to have a higher rate of many violent crimes, including firearm assault, firearm robbery, and firearm homicide. States with higher levels of firearm ownership even have higher levels of overall homicide.<sup>76</sup> Further research demonstrated that availability of firearms plays an important role in increasing the rate of intimate partner homicides.<sup>77</sup> This risk extends to police homicides as well, as police officers are likely to feel more threatened and adjust their behavior accordingly if their community has a high prevalence of firearms. A recent study examining police homicides from 2015 to 2017 demonstrated that rates of police shooting deaths are significantly and positively correlated with levels of household gun ownership, even after accounting for many other variables.<sup>78</sup> However, we are not powerless, and many avenues exist to reduce the impact that violence has on all of us.

## Summary of Recommendations

**Recommendation #1: In line with recommendations from the American Public Health Association<sup>79</sup> and public health research, Birmingham should advocate for reduced gun availability at the local, state, and national levels using legislation to limit handgun purchases, including those at gun shows; limit access to high-powered assault pistols with no legitimate sporting or hunting purpose; and reduce access to permits-to-carry a concealed handgun.**

Significant bodies of research demonstrate the efficacy of legislation in reducing violence in our communities. For instance, a recent meta-analysis showed that stronger firearm laws were associated with decreased rates of firearm homicide, and the strongest evidence was for laws that strengthen background checks and that require a permit to purchase a firearm.<sup>80</sup> Another study comparing states to one another showed that states with universal background checks and violent misdemeanor laws had significantly lower firearm homicide rates than states without these laws.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, permit-to-purchase laws have been associated with a significant reduction in firearm homicide in large, urban counties.<sup>82</sup> Lastly, more state-level restrictive firearm legislation has been linked to a lower rate of female intimate partner homicides.<sup>83</sup>

**Recommendation #2: Focus police involvement on the most serious offenses by decriminalizing activities whose historical purpose has been to police and control marginalized people; ensure that these decriminalized offenses are not within the purview of law enforcement. Priority activities for decriminalization include substance use and possession, sex work, loitering, sleeping in public, and minor traffic violations (expired registrations, jaywalking, broken taillights).**

This recommendation is aligned with guidance from both The President's task force on 21st Century Policing, which advocates

<sup>62</sup> Smith, N. A., Voisin, D. R., Yang, J. P., & Tung, E. L. (2019). Keeping Your Guard Up: Hypervigilance Among Urban Residents Affected By Community And Police Violence. Health Affairs, 38(10), 1662–1669. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2019.00560>

<sup>63</sup> Smith, N. A., Voisin, D. R., Yang, J. P., & Tung, E. L. (2019). Keeping Your Guard Up: Hypervigilance Among Urban Residents Affected By Community And Police Violence. Health Affairs, 38(10), 1662–1669. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2019.00560>

<sup>64</sup> Geller, A., Fagan, J., Tyler, T., & Link, B. G. (2014). Aggressive Policing and the Mental Health of Young Urban Men. American Journal of Public Health, 104(12), 2321–2327. <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2014.302046>

<sup>65</sup> Sewell, A. A., & Jefferson, K. A. (2016). Collateral Damage: The Health Effects of Invasive Police Encounters in New York City. Journal of Urban Health, 93(S1), 42–67. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-015-0016-7>

<sup>66</sup> Ang, Desmond. “The Effects of Police Violence on Inner-City Students.” HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP20-016, June 2020.

<sup>67</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. (2020, March 2). Violence Prevention: Risk and Protective Factors. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

<sup>68</sup> Shader, M. Risk Factors for Delinquency: An Overview. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/trd030127.pdf>

<sup>69</sup> Sampson, R. J. (2013). Great American city: Chicago and the enduring neighborhood effect. University of Chicago Press.

<sup>70</sup> Sharkey, P., Torrats-Espinosa, G., & Takyar, D. (2017). Community and the Crime Decline: The Causal Effect of Local Nonprofits on Violent Crime. American Sociological Review, 82(6), 1214–1240. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122417736289>

<sup>71</sup> Green, B., Horel, T., & Papachristos, A. V. (2017). Modeling Contagion Through Social Networks to Explain and Predict Gunshot Violence in Chicago, 2006 to 2014. JAMA Internal Medicine, 177(3), 326. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.8245>

<sup>72</sup> Papachristos, A. V., Wildeman, C., & Roberto, E. (2015). Tragic, but not random: The social contagion of nonfatal gunshot injuries. Social Science & Medicine, 125, 139–150. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.01.056>

<sup>73</sup> Smith, S.G., Zhang, X., Basile, K.C., Merrick, M.T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., Chen, J. (2018). National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 Data Brief – Updated Release. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/2015data-brief508.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> Koppa, V. (2018). Can information save lives? Effect of a victim-focused police intervention in reducing domestic violence deaths. [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2982227](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2982227)

<sup>75</sup> National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Division of Violence Prevention (2012). Findings from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey 2010-2012 State Report. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportFactsheet.pdf>

<sup>76</sup> Monuteaux, M. C., Lee, L. K., Hemenway, D., Mannix, R., & Fleegler, E. W. (2015). Firearm Ownership and Violent Crime in the U.S.: An Ecologic Study. American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 49(2), 207–214. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2015.02.008>

<sup>77</sup> Gollub, E. L., & Gardner, M. (2019). Firearm legislation and firearm use in female intimate partner homicide using National Violent Death Reporting System data. Preventive medicine, 118, 216–219. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2018.11.007>

<sup>78</sup> Hemenway, D., Azrael, D., Conner, A., & Miller, M. (2019). Variation in Rates of Fatal Police Shootings across US States: the Role of Firearm Availability. Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine, 96(1), 63–73. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0313-z>

<sup>79</sup> American Public Health Association (1998). Policy 9818: Handgun Injury Prevention. <https://yvppolicyportal.safestates.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/APHA-Handgun-Statement.pdf>

<sup>80</sup> Lee, L. K., Fleegler, E. W., Farrell, C., Avakame, E., Srinivasan, S., Hemenway, D., & Monuteaux, M. C. (2017). Firearm Laws and Firearm Homicides: A Systematic Review. JAMA internal medicine, 177(1), 106–119. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.7051>

<sup>81</sup> Siegel, M., Pahn, M., Xuan, Z., Fleegler, E., & Hemenway, D. (2019). The Impact of State Firearm Laws on Homicide and Suicide Deaths in the USA, 1991-2016: a Panel Study. Journal of General Internal Medicine, 34(10), 2021–2028. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-019-04922-x>

<sup>82</sup> Crifasi, C. K., Merrill-Francis, M., McCourt, A., Vernick, J. S., Wintemute, G. J., & Webster, D. W. (2018). Association between Firearm Laws and Homicide in Urban Counties. Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine, 95(3), 383–390. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0273-3>

<sup>83</sup> Sivaraman, J. J., Ranapurwala, S. I., Morocco, K. E., & Marshall, S. W. (2019). Association of State Firearm Legislation With Female Intimate Partner Homicide. American journal of Preventive Medicine, 56(1), 125–133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2018.09.007>



for law enforcement agencies to preferentially use “least harm” solutions,<sup>84</sup> as well as policy statements from the American Public Health Association.<sup>85</sup> Decriminalization of minor offenses would reduce the monumental, racialized impacts of the criminal justice system. Moreover, decriminalization of minor drug crimes can promote treatment of substance use disorders and allow police officers to focus on more serious crimes. For instance, data from Portugal, which decriminalized all drug use in 2001, showed increased uptake of drug treatment, reductions in opiate-related deaths and infectious diseases, and increases in the quantity of drugs seized by the authorities due to shifting law enforcement resources from minor possession crimes to a focus on traffickers.<sup>86</sup>

**Recommendation #3: Build a cohesive data collection and analysis system through which to enhance public safety and public health initiatives. The City should support the use of technologies that protect civil liberties while improving health and safety, encouraging appropriate data sharing and using publicly informed evaluations to regularly refine data collection techniques.**

First, Birmingham should advocate for Alabama's continued participation in the National Violent Death Reporting System, which collects data about homicides, suicides, unintentional firearm deaths, and deaths where individuals are killed by law enforcement, and Birmingham should advocate for Alabama's continued participation in this system.

In addition, in line with recommendations from the American Public Health Association,<sup>87</sup> Birmingham should provide mechanisms for state and local public health agencies to share data with various entities to encourage appropriate prevention and intervention measures (such as sharing with state attorneys general for further investigation of police-related deaths). Lastly, data collection should be guided by best practices, such as the CDC's recommendations regarding which data elements to collect in instances of intimate partner violence.<sup>88</sup>

**Recommendation #4: While leveraging data to promote wellness in all communities, the City of Birmingham should carefully consider potential impacts on individual privacy, dignity, and legal rights.**

Although data is a powerful tool for promoting wellness and addressing inequities, it also has the potential to intrude on individual privacy and even perpetuate the inequities that we seek to eliminate. For instance, one study showed that predictive policing of drug crimes resulted in increasingly disproportionate policing of historically over-policed communities.<sup>89</sup> It has also been shown that facial recognition software has significant biases, producing more accurate results for white faces than faces of color<sup>90, 91</sup> and increasing the risk of inappropriate arrests.<sup>92</sup> Birmingham must utilize data in a thoughtful manner that carefully balances the potential benefits and harms.

## Strategy #2: Implement a Continuum of Public Health model to address public health issues that lead to public safety issues, particularly around violence prevention, homelessness, and violence interruption.

### SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM:

Currently, public safety is executed across a Continuum of Force, and the primary institutions responsible for promoting community wellness are law enforcement agencies, judicial systems, and prisons. There is, however, another system that is possible. Collating the best practices of other cities, we envision a future where community members are cared for through a comprehensive, integrated system of violence prevention programs, Crisis Responders, wraparound treatment centers, and individual advocates.

In Chicago, community mobilization, public education, and social services provided in a violence prevention program called CeaseFire led to a decrease in shootings by 16-28% in a majority of the sites evaluated.<sup>93</sup> In SafeStreets, a similar program designed to prevent youth violence and promote positive youth development in Baltimore City, 88% of clients received assistance finding a job and 95% of clients received assistance getting into school or a GED program.<sup>94</sup>

In Eugene, Oregon, moreover, the community built an alternative response system to the police — called CAHOOTS — for individuals struggling with mental health crises, and the program's success inspired countless similar initiatives nationwide. Through CAHOOTS, unique teams of medics and mental health crisis workers are deployed through 911 dispatchers to help those experiencing mental illness, homelessness, or addiction. In 2019, this program responded to 24,000 calls — about 20% of total dispatches — and only 150 of those required police back-up.<sup>95</sup> Even more impressive, this program saves the City nearly \$8.5 million in public safety costs every year, plus another \$14 million in ambulance trips and ER costs.<sup>96</sup>

In addition, for individuals requiring Crisis Responders or people involved in the criminal justice system, wraparound treatment centers are a critical touchpoint to get connected with necessary services on the path to wellness. The Missouri Division of Youth Services (DYS), for instance, focuses on therapeutic and rehabilitative programs for their justice-involved youth, and the result is astounding. Compared to a 68% recidivism rate nationwide,<sup>97</sup> the recidivism rate for Missouri DHS is less than 7%. Half of these youth attain a GED while in the program and 90% are meaningfully involved in their communities through school or work when they leave the program.<sup>98</sup>

This system must be designed to meet each person where they currently are, and we know that some people will require more personalized attention to not fall through the cracks. For individuals who encounter crisis intervention services or treatment centers with frequency, individually paired advocates can be just the support needed to move forward. These paired advocates can provide meaningful mentorship and facilitate unique personal development plans. In New York City, this model has been used to reduce recidivism among justice-involved youth, and only 3% of youth paired with a mentor through the Advocate, Intervene, Mentor program incurred a felony conviction within one year.<sup>99</sup> These programs need not be financial burdens — a paired advocate program in Boulder, Colorado called the Partnership for Active Community Engagement has a cost per client of approximately \$14 per day, compared to \$61.50 per jail bed day — approximately 23% of the cost of a jail bed day.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>84</sup> President's task force on 21st Century Policing. (May 2015). Final Report of The President's task force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. [https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce\\_finalreport.pdf](https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf)

<sup>85</sup> American Public Health Association. (2018). Addressing Law Enforcement Violence as a Public Health Issue: Policy Number 201811. <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2019/01/29/law-enforcement-violence>

<sup>86</sup> Hughes, C. E., & Stevens, A. (2010). What Can We Learn From The Portuguese Decriminalization of Illicit Drugs? British Journal of Criminology, 50(6), 999–1022. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azq038>

<sup>87</sup> American Public Health Association. (2018). Addressing Law Enforcement Violence as a Public Health Issue: Policy Number 201811. <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2019/01/29/law-enforcement-violence>

<sup>88</sup> Breiding M.J., Basile K.C., Smith S.G., Black M.C., Mahendra R.R. (2015). Intimate Partner Violence Surveillance: Uniform Definitions and Recommended Data Elements, Version 2.0. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<sup>89</sup> Lum, K., & Isaac, W. (2016). To predict and serve? Significance, 13(5), 14-19. doi:10.1111/j.1740-9713.2016.00960.x

<sup>90</sup> Lohr, S. (2018, Feb 9). Facial Recognition is Accurate, If You're a White Guy. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/09/technology/facial-recognition-race-artificial-intelligence.html>

<sup>91</sup> Singer, N., Metz C. (2019, Dec 19). Many Facial-Recognition Systems Are Biased, Says U.S. Study. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/19/technology/facial-recognition-bias.html>

<sup>92</sup> Hill, K. (2020, June 24). Wrongfully Accused by an Algorithm. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/24/technology/facial-recognition-arrest.html>

<sup>93</sup> “CeaseFire: A Public Health Approach to Reduce Shootings and Killings,” National Institute of Justice, accessed October 19, 2020, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/ceasefire-public-health-approach-reduce-shootings-and-killings>.

<sup>94</sup> Philip Leaf and JH Bloomberg School of Public Health, “Safe Streets,” Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, accessed October 19, 2020, [https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/center-for-prevention-of-youth-violence/field\\_reports/Safe\\_Streets.html](https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/center-for-prevention-of-youth-violence/field_reports/Safe_Streets.html).

<sup>95</sup> “This Oregon Town of 170,000 Replaced Some Cops with Medics and Mental Health Workers. It's Worked for over 30 Years - CNN,” <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/05/us/cahoots-replace-police-mental-health-trnd/index.html>.

<sup>96</sup> “This Oregon Town of 170,000 Replaced Some Cops with Medics and Mental Health Workers. It's Worked for over 30 Years - CNN,” <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/05/us/cahoots-replace-police-mental-health-trnd/index.html>.

<sup>97</sup> Mariel Alper, “2018 Update on Prisoner Recidivism: A 9-Year Follow-up Period (2005-2014),” Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018, 24.

<sup>98</sup> “The Missouri Approach - Results,” <http://missouriapproach.org/results/>.

<sup>99</sup> Lindsey Cramer, Mathew Lynch, Micaela Lipman, Lilly Yu, Nan Marie Astone, “Evaluation Report on NYC's Advocate, Intervene, Mentor Program,” Urban Institute, 2018.

<sup>100</sup> “The Pace Program Partnership for Active Community Engagement,” <https://apps.larimer.org/tencounty/conference/2009/pace.pdf>.

This Continuum of Public Health would be both evidence-based in its components and cutting edge in its novelty and impact. Whereas implementing one programmatic change would make minor, incremental improvement, crafting a cohesive system of public health sets the stage for systemic change. This visionary system would make Birmingham a leader not just in the South, but in the entire nation.

**Recommendation #1: Develop robust community-based violence prevention programs, including those specifically designed to address domestic violence.**

The Women's Center should be a hub for domestic violence prevention, implementing programs based on best practices from organizations such as REACH. Throughout Massachusetts, REACH provides domestic violence education that promotes respectful, healthy relationships, helps individuals recognize and respond to signs of abuse, and empowers individuals to refer others for services. In their programming, a critical element of successful domestic violence prevention is educating children on bodily autonomy, self-love, healthy relationships and gender respect. The organization utilizes both informal dialogues and professional trainings to reach community members as well as police departments, medical professionals, social service agencies, military personnel, local businesses and corporations, K-12 schools, college campuses, and faith organizations. REACH also trains employers to help them create policies that support employees who are survivors of domestic violence, in compliance with state law. In addition to the model provided by successful groups such as REACH, the CDC also provides recommendations to inform program development.<sup>101</sup>

To address broader community-based violence, strong partnerships are required and should be implemented by community-based organizations, such as nonprofits, which empower formerly incarcerated people. Programming can be based on evidenced-based approaches to violence prevention, in which credible messengers serve as the cornerstone for change by interrupting potentially violent conflicts, identifying and facilitating treatment for the highest risk individuals, and mobilizing the community to change norms.<sup>102</sup>

Learning from the experiences of other cities, violence prevention programs should have fewer sites with better staffing, which can focus on larger, more naturally defined target areas that might span legislative district lines. Levels of crime and the readiness of local organizations to step forward in support of the prevention programs should determine where the program is sited. Prevention programs should partner with a district detective for rapid and detailed information. To foster mutual respect and collaboration, beat officers should make a concerted effort to get to know staff members for these programs. However, officers should remain separated in public spaces such as the street so as to not hurt staff members' relationship with community members who may mistrust or have negative experiences with police.<sup>103</sup>

**Recommendation #2: Develop an additional branch of public safety that dispatches medics and mental health professionals to nonviolent 911 calls.**

This recommendation is aligned with The President's task force on 21st Century Policing, which calls for law enforcement agencies to “engage in multidisciplinary, community team approaches for planning, implementing, and responding to crisis situations with complex causal factors.”<sup>104</sup> Although this is economically feasible<sup>105</sup> and a moral improvement on our current practice of utilizing law enforcement for an unreasonable breadth of situations, this is no small undertaking.

First, 911 operators and dispatchers must be trained on mental health screening in order to properly redirect calls which do not require law enforcement. Once trained, dispatchers should filter the calls they receive and deploy Crisis Responders to all nonviolent situations, such as loitering, disturbing the peace, neighbor disputes, parent-child disputes, mental health crises, homelessness, drug use, and threats of suicide.

Similar to Albuquerque's Community Safety Department,<sup>106</sup> Birmingham's Crisis Responders should constitute a third branch of responders (in addition to Fire and Police), who are overseen by the Office of Peace and Policy, Department of Health, or Department of Social Services. Based on best practices in other cities, the crisis response team should pair one medic (such as a nurse or EMT) with an unarmed, civilian mental health worker whose background is in social work, housing and homelessness, diversion, violence prevention, or a similar public wellness field. Responders utilize conflict resolutions and mediation skills to de-escalate the situation and then provide a more thorough assessment, first aid, and/or transportation to service locations such as wraparound treatment centers.<sup>107</sup> Responders should not have the authority to arrest citizens, and they only call law enforcement if they are unable to de-escalate.

In order to evaluate the program efficacy and assess the impact on different marginalized groups, data logged by responders after each encounter should include:

- Responders' names
- Start and end time of encounter
- Location of encounter
- Basic demographics of the person in crisis (approximate age, race/ethnicity, sex)
- Written description of the encounter
- Level of escalation that occurred (whether BPD was called, names of officers involved, any harm inflicted on person in crisis, any harm to responders or police, weapons used by person in crisis, weapons used by police)
- Outcome of the encounter (crisis resolution, refusal of services, transportation to medical care, transportation to treatment center, other)

The City should also consider providing the client with a voluntary paper survey or a link to an anonymous survey that would ask participants for more detailed information (such as age, race, sex, gender identity, income, employment status, substance use history, housing status, education level). The goal of this survey would be to collect data about disadvantaged groups in a sensitive, anonymous way that still enables Birmingham to improve its service delivery over time.

**Recommendation #3: For 911 calls that do require medical assistance, improve the quality of care delivered by hiring a medical director for Birmingham Fire and Rescue Service.**

**Recommendation #4: Invest in wraparound treatment centers whose mission is to promote individual and community wellness through therapeutic, rehabilitative services as an alternative to cycles of incarceration.**

While many individuals served by the Crisis Responder system may only need a one-time connection to available resources, certain individuals will require intensive support to build stability and wellness. Wraparound treatment centers are an essential component for those individuals, and locals involved with the CAHOOTS program note that the crisis response team's efficacy is limited if there are no places to bring its clients;<sup>108</sup> without affordable housing, detox centers, mental health facilities, and wraparound treatment centers, people will remain trapped in their current circumstances and likely face incarceration in their future.

Ideally, wraparound treatment centers should be designed to feel like homes. In New York's Close to Home program — an alternative to youth incarceration — residents have rooms that they can decorate with their art, kitchens where they are able to cook, living rooms where they feel comfortable recreating, and parks nearby for exercise. In Close to Home, security consists of alarms, security protocols, and locked doors at stairwells with outside access. Staff members have keys to residents' rooms, but “they typically knock first, waiting for an invitation to enter.”<sup>109</sup> In order to avoid repeating Alabama's

<sup>101</sup> “Prevention Strategies|Intimate Partner Violence|Violence Prevention|Injury Center|CDC,” <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/prevention.html>.

<sup>102</sup> “What We Do,” <https://cvg.org/what-we-do/>.

<sup>103</sup> Skogan, Wesley G. , Hartnett, Susan M., Bump, Natalie, and Dubois, Jill, “Evaluation of CeaseFire Chicago,” March 2009, [http://www.skogan.org/files/Evaluation\\_of\\_CeaseFire-Chicago\\_Main\\_Report.03-2009.pdf](http://www.skogan.org/files/Evaluation_of_CeaseFire-Chicago_Main_Report.03-2009.pdf).

<sup>104</sup> President's task force on 21st Century Policing. (May 2015). Final Report of The President's task force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. [https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce\\_finalreport.pdf](https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf) .

<sup>105</sup> “This Oregon Town of 170,000 Replaced Some Cops with Medics and Mental Health Workers. It's Worked for over 30 Years - CNN,” <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/05/us/cahoots-replace-police-mental-health-trnd/index.html>.

<sup>106</sup> “Mayor Tim Keller to Refocus Millions in Public Safety Resources with First-of-Its-Kind Civilian Response Department,” <https://www.cabq.gov/mayor/news/mayor-tim-keller-to-refocus-millions-in-public-safety-resources-with-first-of-its-kind-civilian-response-department>.

<sup>107</sup> “Crisis Response & Peer Navigators,” <http://olympiawa.gov/city-services/police-department/Crisis-Response-Peer-Navigator.aspx#:~:text=The%20Crisis%20Response%20Unit%20is,confidential%2C%20voluntary%20crisis%20response%20assistance>.

<sup>108</sup> “This Oregon Town of 170,000 Replaced Some Cops with Medics and Mental Health Workers. It's Worked for over 30 Years - CNN,” <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/05/us/cahoots-replace-police-mental-health-trnd/index.html>.

<sup>109</sup> Joaquin Palomino, Jill Tucker, “Keeping kids out of cells,” (San Francisco Chronicle, 2019).

history of overcrowding and subsequent violence in prisons,<sup>110</sup> an expert trained in occupational health or similar should determine the maximum number of residents per square feet.

While incarceration erodes the social connections and community participation needed for success after prison release, wraparound treatment centers help individuals to remain invested and engaged in their community. Residents are often required to continue attending their normal school or work, encouraged to visit family on weekends and attend family therapy, provided with opportunities for group outings, and participate in the community in positive ways. To facilitate this continued connection, centers should be near residents' existing homes.<sup>111</sup>

The potential services provided in these wraparound treatment centers is extensive. A key feature is that residents work with staff to craft and implement personalized support plans, consisting of short-term and long-term goals, resources they need to accomplish them, and concrete plans for achieving those goals. Staff can serve as case workers, helping residents to access affordable housing, education, employment, and healthcare resources. Partnerships with local employers can also be leveraged to train and later employ residents within our community. Meanwhile, programming at treatment centers can help residents build stability and independence through personal finance classes, “know-your-rights” classes, anger management classes, and more. Perhaps most importantly, treatment center staff would provide trauma-informed and culturally informed therapy, mentoring, treatment, mindfulness practices, and exercise opportunities to heal the physical and emotional effects of personal and intergenerational trauma. Staff may also facilitate group discussions to help residents understand their interaction with the justice system in the broader context of mass incarceration and historical policing, with a focus on Black humanity. Residents return home when both they and staff members feel they will be able to implement their plan from home with the support of a paired advocate.

**Recommendation #5: Employ at least nine total data analysts who can advise on data collection techniques, analyze existing data, and provide summary reports in order to implement future changes based on robust evidence.**

At least nine data analysts<sup>112</sup> trained in geographic information systems should be employed through the Office of Peace and Policy, Department of Social Services, or Department of Health. Analysts should have similar skill sets as the analysts below, but they would ideally merge the traditional data interests of public health together with those of criminal justice:

- a. New Orleans: Crime Analyst and Police Application Specialist
- b. Baltimore: Administrative Policy Analyst, Police Department

In the Continuum of Public Health, analysts would track how often an individual interacts with Crisis Responders and BPD, and individuals with more than a designated number of encounters per year would be identified and paired with an advocate. A map of Crisis Responder and BPD encounters should be visualized on an easy-to-use dashboard (see dashboard in New Orleans and Seattle), which includes information about the interaction such as the names of the Crisis Responders or officers involved.

Data trackers would also analyze broader trends in both social determinants of health data (such as employment and education opportunities, ) and Crisis Response/BPD usage data in order to identify the areas of highest need. Based on their analysis, data trackers could then recommend specific areas for targeted services, rather than targeted policing. For instance, if an area with particularly high unemployment rates requires Crisis Responders or police intervention more frequently, then Birmingham can target employment resources to this area. Lastly, data analysts should present and publish yearly reports regarding the work of BPD and Crisis Responders.

**Recommendation #6: Utilize paired advocates to assist individuals who interact frequently with Crisis Responders or BPD.**

People who exceed the designated threshold for number of interactions with Crisis Responders and/or BPD should be paired with an advocate, whose backgrounds include social work, housing and homelessness, diversion, violence prevention, or other public wellness fields. Advocates would be encouraged to have shared backgrounds and demographics (such as color and sex) with their clients to facilitate understanding and create a safe sanctuary for the client. The advocate and client would meet regularly to craft and implement personalized support plans. Although clients would not need to live in residential, wraparound treatment centers, the process of developing and achieving personalized plans for a better future would be similar.

**Recommendation #7: Incorporate principles of trauma-informed care across all sectors of law enforcement and social services.**

According to the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care at The State University of New York, trauma-informed care “understands and considers the pervasive nature of trauma and promotes environments of healing and recovery rather than practices and services that may inadvertently re-traumatize.”<sup>113</sup> Birmingham should utilize existing guidelines<sup>114</sup> to incorporate the principles of trauma-informed care and create a healing space for all served.

**Recommendation #8: Commit to reallocation of funding from law enforcement agencies toward the development of a sustainable, long-term Continuum of Public Health, which addresses violence and minimizes harm without criminalizing entire communities. These financial reforms shall expand the number of social workers and mental health professionals employed by the City of Birmingham.**

In evaluating current programs across the nation, one clear signal is that funding matters. Reallocation of funding is possible, and Albuquerque, for instance, diverted millions from other public safety agencies to fund its Crisis Responders.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, St. Petersburg, Florida funds its Responders through \$3.8 million in City funding that was originally allocated to hire 25 new officers, in addition to a \$3.1 million federal grant.<sup>116</sup> Even CAHOOTS, which has a \$2 million dollar budget in order to fund three constantly staffed crisis intervention vans calls for more funding in order to increase its efficacy.<sup>117</sup>

In many cases, funding results from a collaboration between multiple agencies. For instance, each site in CeaseFire's violence prevention program has an annual budget of approximately \$240,000 funded by the Illinois Department of Corrections, which covers salaries of the violence prevention coordinator, the outreach worker supervisor, and the outreach staff. The central office staff, however, is funded by local foundations and the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, an agency that primarily manages federal pass-through money to the State.<sup>118</sup>

Lastly, funding must be stable and predictable. Organizations cannot thrive on funding that varies every single year, as the organization must then devote vast resources to development efforts and divert attention away from long-term visions and investments. One example of sustainable funding is New York City's Close to Home wraparound youth residential centers, where the City pays the residential centers even if the rooms are not full. This allows the program to stable funding, in turn, the residential centers agree to accept all youth.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>110</sup> United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and United States Attorney's Offices for the Northern, Middle, and Southern District of Alabama, “Investigation of Alabama's State Prisons for Men,” April 2019, <https://www.justice.gov/crt/case-document/file/1149971/download>.

<sup>111</sup> “The Missouri Approach - Who We Are,” <http://missouriapproach.org/approach/>.

<sup>112</sup> Christopher Bruce, “Report and Recommendations on the Birmingham, Alabama Police Department's Crime Analysis Capabilities,” 2018.

<sup>113</sup> <http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html>.

<sup>114</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014. [https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA\\_Trauma.pdf](https://ncsacw.samhsa.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA_Trauma.pdf).

<sup>115</sup> “Mayor Tim Keller to Refocus Millions in Public Safety Resources with First-of-Its-Kind Civilian Response Department,” <https://www.cabq.gov/mayor/news/mayor-tim-keller-to-refocus-millions-in-public-safety-resources-with-first-of-its-kind-civilian-response-department>.

<sup>116</sup> Vera Institute of Justice, “After Weeks of Protests, a Look at Policy Changes in U.S. Policing,” <https://www.vera.org/policy-changes-in-us-policing>.

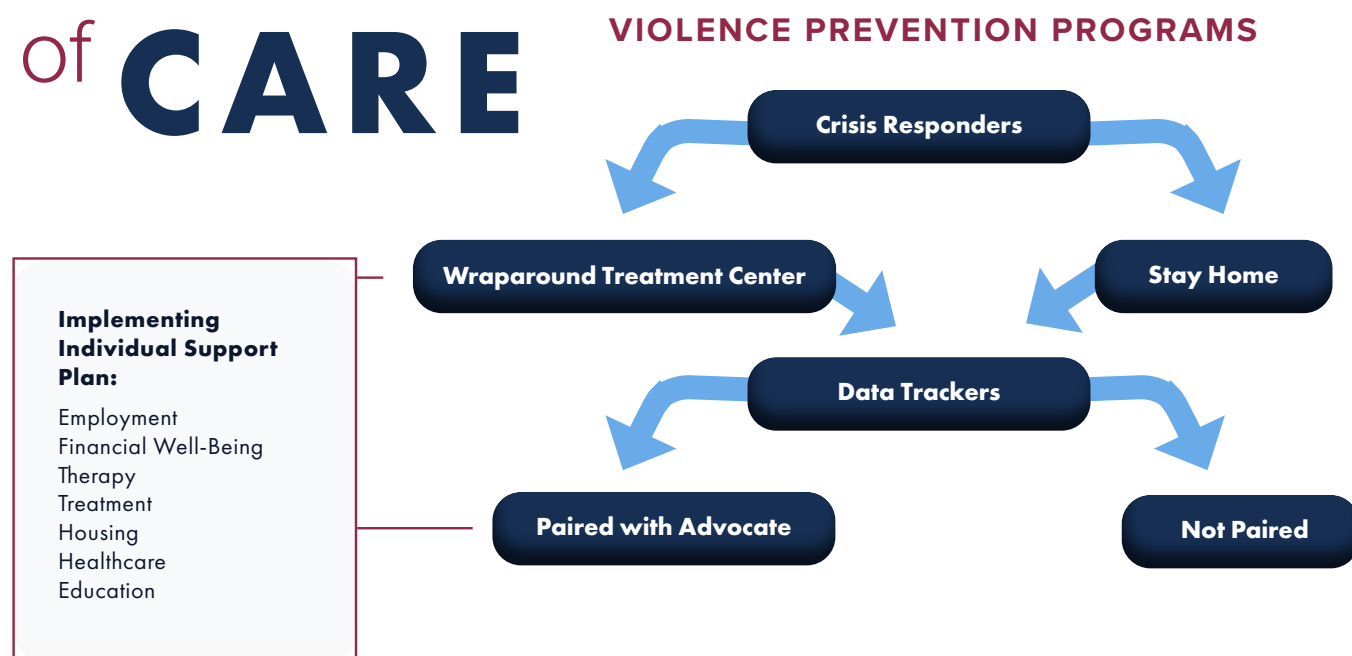
<sup>117</sup> “This Oregon Town of 170,000 Replaced Some Cops with Medics and Mental Health Workers. It's Worked for over 30 Years - CNN,” <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/05/us/cahoots-replace-police-mental-health-trnd/index.html>.

<sup>118</sup> Skogan, Wesley G. , Hartnett, Susan M., Bump, Natalie, and Dubois, Jill, “Evaluation of CeaseFire Chicago,” March 2009, [http://www.skogan.org/files/Evaluation\\_of\\_CeaseFire-Chicago\\_Main\\_Report.03-2009.pdf](http://www.skogan.org/files/Evaluation_of_CeaseFire-Chicago_Main_Report.03-2009.pdf).

<sup>119</sup> “New York Stopped Jailing Most Juvenile Offenders. Can That Work in San Francisco?” - San Francisco Chronicle, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/crime/article/Keeping-kids-out-of-cells-14934371.php>.



# Continuum of CARE



**Figure 1:** The Continuum of Public Health is designed to be a cohesive system that promotes wellness for community members who might otherwise become entangled in the criminal justice system. First, a new branch of public safety would dispatch Crisis Responders (medics and mental health professionals) to nonviolent 911 calls. This team would be responsible for assessing and de-escalating the situation, connecting the individual to any needed social services, and, if necessary, transporting the individual to medical or psychiatric treatment. Individuals who require more extended care could then be served through wraparound treatment centers, where they would receive therapy, more intensive connection to social services, and individual support in a residential setting. Meanwhile, data analysts would track how often an individual interacts with Crisis Responders and BPD, and individuals with more than a designated number of encounters per year would be identified. These individuals would be paired with an individual advocate, who would assist with creating and implementing personalized support plans (including plans for employment, housing, etc.) to build a more stable, independent future. This plan may or may not include spending time in a residential facility such as a wraparound treatment center. Lastly, this entire system will be supported by a foundation of violence prevention programs that work to address risk factors and strengthen protective factors to reduce violence in our community.

**Strategy #3:** Foster law enforcement officers who are poised to serve the community to the full extent of their training, skills, and judgment by improving the wellness and safety of officers.

## SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM:

The mental and physical well-being of police officers is a critical component of public safety. Like all of us, police officers are not able to exercise their best judgment or utilize the full extent of their training and skills if hampered by injuries, sleep deprivation, or psychological symptoms. Attending to the multi-faceted wellness of our police officers will help them to serve our community with the utmost respect and honor.

Many law enforcement officers face personal risk or are exposed to trauma at some point in their work, and we know that traumatic incidents while on duty increase an officer's risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms.<sup>120</sup> These psychological consequences are often underrecognized and undervalued, and officer safety efforts frequently focus on the physical threats of engaging with a criminal suspect. However, the reality is that the greatest danger faced by police officers is the result of untreated psychological distress. In fact, police officers die of suicide 2.4 times more frequently than homicides, according to a national study examining National Occupational Mortality Surveillance data.<sup>121</sup>

Moreover, a large proportion of officer injuries and deaths result from the dangers of vehicular work under such stressful circumstances. In recent years, for instance, the number one cause of officer fatalities has been traffic accidents. Among those who died, nearly half were not wearing seat belts. Vehicular accidents are also responsible for more injuries among police officers than assaults.<sup>122</sup> In order to create change in this area, the BPD must foster a professional culture that embodies and upholds the values of full physical and mental health for their officers. The following recommendations reflect the extensive research and guidelines of The President's task force on 21st Century Policing, completed under President Barack Obama.<sup>123</sup>

## Summary of Recommendations

**Recommendation #1: The Birmingham Police Department must promote safety and wellness at every level of the organization.**

Many cities are recognizing the importance of culture in promoting officer safety, and the Chicago Police Department, for example, plans to launch a pilot Officer Support System program "designed to prompt conversations between supervisors and officers who may be in need of support," perform an assessment of additional resources needed and write an Officer Wellness Support Plan, develop the training for the Chaplains Unit members on standard operating procedures, and improve awareness of their current services.<sup>124</sup>

**Recommendation #2: The Birmingham Police Department should minimize the potential harms from working in law enforcement by (1) Providing every law enforcement officer with individual tactical first-aid kits, tactical first-aid kit training, and anti-ballistic vests, and (2) Adopting policies that require officers to wear seat belts and bullet-proof vests, and provide training to raise awareness of the consequences of failure to do so.**

<sup>120</sup> Violanti, J. M. (2004). Predictors of police suicide ideation. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 34(3), 277-283. doi:10.1521/suli.34.3.277.42775

<sup>121</sup> President's task force on 21st Century Policing. (May 2015). Final Report of The President's task force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. [https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce\\_finalreport.pdf](https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf)

<sup>122</sup> President's task force on 21st Century Policing.

<sup>123</sup> President's task force on 21st Century Policing. (May 2015). Final Report of The President's task force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. [https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce\\_finalreport.pdf](https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf)

<sup>124</sup> Mayor's Office of Violence Reduction (2020). *Our City, Our Safety: A Comprehensive Plan to Reduce Violence in Chicago*. City of Chicago. <https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/sites/public-safety-and-violence-reduction/pdfs/OurCityOurSafety.pdf>

**Recommendation #3: The Birmingham Police Department should minimize the potential for impaired judgment due to sleep deprivation by implementing scientifically supported shift lengths.**

**Recommendation #4: The Birmingham Police Department should lay the groundwork for future evidence-based improvements by collecting data regarding officer deaths and injuries, as well as near-miss events.**

The Police Foundation's Law Enforcement Near Miss Reporting System is an example of a voluntary, anonymous forum for officers to share stories of near misses and learn lessons from others' experiences.<sup>125</sup>

**Recommendation #5:**

Birmingham Police Department policies should support the well-being of officers and their families by (1) Recognizing fitness for duty examinations as definitive evidence of valid duty or non-duty-related disability in pension plans, and (2) Providing Public Safety Officer Benefits to survivors of officers killed while working, regardless of whether the officer used safety equipment (seat belt or anti-ballistic vest) or if officer death was the result of suicide attributed to a current diagnosis of duty-related mental illness, including but not limited to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

XI

APPENDIX

<sup>125</sup>Police Foundation. (2016). LEO Near Miss. <https://www.leonearmiss.org/>.



## APPENDIX A. TASK FORCE MEMBERS' BIOGRAPHIES

### Jaselle Houghtlin:

Jaselle Houghtlin is a recent graduate from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and minor in biology. She is a community activist who led a series of peaceful protests and rallies with a group of her peers in Birmingham, AL in the wake of civil unrest across the nation. She is passionate about community health and plans to pursue a graduate program with a focus in public health. Jaselle plans to continue to actively use her voice and fight for those who go unheard.

### Cara McClure:

Cara McClure is a prominent social justice activist, co-founder of Black Lives Matter Birmingham Chapter, executive director of Faith & Works, former state coordinator for Black Voters Matter, and currently she serves as a Regional Political Director for the Alabama Democratic Party Coordinated Campaign.

Following George Zimmerman's 2013 acquittal for the murder of Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida, McClure co-founded the Birmingham Chapter of Black Lives Matter. As the chapter grew, she participated in a national Department of Justice-sponsored pilot to build trust between police and marginalized community members. She also spearheaded local action as part of "National Mama's Bail Out Day" to reunite families for Mother's Day, and helped to organize political action following the 2018 police shooting of E. J. Bradford Jr. at the Riverchase Galleria. She was arrested and charged with trespassing after participating in a banner drop at the mall in December.

Cara has assisted and collaborated with many movements in Alabama such as Fight for \$15, Alabama's fight to end predatory lending with Arise Alabama, Greater Birmingham Ministries, Poor People's Campaign, A National Call for Moral Revival, Stand as One, Faith in Action, and Shut Down Etowah/Alabama's Immigrant Rights movement.

McClure also worked on Bernie Sanders' 2016 Democratic primary campaign, assisting locally with voter engagement and political education. In the 2018 general election, she ran for Public Service Commission Place One on the Democratic statewide ticket.

McClure is credited with proposing to Mayor Randall Woodfin's office that the City should create a Black Lives Matter street painting, modeled after the one in Washington, D.C., during the George Floyd protests.

### Victor Revill, JD:

Victor Revill is a native of Albany, Georgia. As a child, Victor had a heart to serve others, and, from a very young age, he naturally gravitated toward the law.

After graduating high school with honors, he attended Alabama State University on a full football scholarship. At ASU, Victor excelled both on and off the field, ultimately leading to extensive involvement in student government. After graduating with honors from ASU, Victor attended the University of Louisville's Brandeis School of Law. During his tenure in law school, he clerked for Kentucky's Court of Appeals, the Federal Defenders in the Middle District of Alabama, and taught future leaders as a Street Law Instructor at Central High School.

In his final year at Brandeis, Victor was elected Student Bar Association President, making him the second African American in the law school's history to hold that position. Mr. Revill is most known for his advocacy in Criminal Defense work and being wrongfully arrested while standing up for his client in front of the Blount County Courthouse in 2017. For several years, Mr. Revill has been named a "Top Criminal Defense Attorney" by *Birmingham* magazine and several other organizations, and Attorney Revill has received a long list of awards and recognitions for being a staunch and passionate advocate on behalf of his clients.

Attorney Revill practices all over the State of Alabama and has become known as a fierce opponent in the courtroom. He is the owner of the Revill Law Firm, which is located in downtown Birmingham, Alabama.

### Joyce Vance, JD:

Joyce White Vance is a Distinguished Professor of the Practice of Law. She served as the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama from 2009 to 2017. She was nominated for that position by President Barack Obama in May of 2009

and unanimously confirmed by the Senate in August of 2009. Professor Vance served on the Attorney General's Advisory Committee and was the Co-Chair of its Criminal Practice Subcommittee. As U.S. Attorney, she was responsible for overseeing all federal criminal investigations and prosecutions in North Alabama, including matters involving civil rights, national security, cybercrime, public corruption, healthcare and corporate fraud, violent crime and drug trafficking. She was also responsible for affirmative and defensive civil litigation on behalf of the government and for all federal criminal and civil appeals.

Before becoming U.S. Attorney, Professor Vance served as an Assistant United States Attorney in Birmingham for 18 years. She spent 10 years as a criminal prosecutor before moving to the Appellate Division in 2002. She became the Chief of that Division in 2005. Prior to her work as a federal prosecutor she spent six years as a litigator in private practice, first at Arent, Fox, Kintner, Plotkin & Kahn in Washington D.C., and then at Bradley, Arant, Rose & White, now Bradley, Arant, Boult & Cummings, in Birmingham. Professor Vance received a B.A. from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, *magna cum laude*, and a J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law.

Professor Vance recently received the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health's Lou Wooster Public Health Hero Award for her leadership in creating a community-engaged initiative that included partners from law enforcement, the medical and business communities, and educators to address the heroin and opioid epidemic in northern Alabama. She is a frequent legal commentator on MSNBC and other news outlets.

### Edward Watkins, PhD:

Edward A. Watkins is a 36-year veteran of law enforcement having served with the New York City Police Department, the Birmingham Police Department, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency State Bureau of Investigation, and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. He is a certified F.B.I. Law Enforcement Instructor and the former lead facilitator for Procedural Justice and Implicit Bias training and has instructed a countless number of police recruits in matters regarding situational awareness, accurate and informative report writing, and Consular and Diplomatic Affairs (during his tenure with the Birmingham Police Department). He is the former 1st Vice President of the Fraternal Order of Police Birmingham Lodge #1 (the largest fraternal police organization in the state of Alabama), where he served for two consecutive uncontested terms. After retiring in July of 2020, he is currently a Professor of Justice Studies at historic Miles College.



APPENDIX B. PUBLIC LISTENING SESSIONS

The Birmingham Public Safety task force hosted a series of public listening sessions to gain comprehensive input and expertise from stakeholders and diverse constituency groups. The information collected in these listening sessions informed and advised the task force in developing its recommendations.

LISTENING SESSION 1. CRIMINAL DEFENSE

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 15, 2020  
Hosted By: Magic City Bar Association  
Lead Facilitator: Victor Revill, Attorney

LISTENING SESSION 2. LGBTQ+

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 17, 2020  
Hosted By: Mayor Woodfin's LGBTQ+ Advisory Board  
Lead Facilitator: Gina Mallisham  
Co-Facilitators: Carmarion Anderson, Patrick Scarborough, Tya Williams

LISTENING SESSION 3. JUSTICE IMPACTED

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 19, 2020  
Hosted By: Restorative Strategies  
Lead Facilitator: Stephanie Hicks

LISTENING SESSION 4. PUBLIC AND MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 22, 2020  
Hosted By: Office of Peace & Policy  
Lead Facilitator: Brandon Johnson

LISTENING SESSION 5. FORMER & CURRENT LAW ENFORCEMENT

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 23, 2020  
Hosted By: Birmingham Police Department  
Lead Facilitators: Brandon Johnson, Sybil Scarborough

LISTENING SESSION 6. YOUTH COMMUNITY (AGES 16-24)

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 25, 2020  
Hosted By: The City of Birmingham Mayor's Office Division of Youth Services  
Lead Facilitator: David Dada, Deputy Director of Division of Youth Services

LISTENING SESSION 7. FAITH-BASED

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 29, 2020  
Hosted By: Office of Social Justice & Racial Equity  
Lead Facilitator: Pastor Terry Drake, Liaison to Faith-Based Community

LISTENING SESSION 8. SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — September 30, 2020  
Hosted By: Birmingham Small Business Council  
Lead Facilitator: Damian Carson

LISTENING SESSION 9. WOODLAWN AND FIVE POINTS WEST MERCHANT'S ASSOCIATION

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — October 6, 2020  
Hosted By: Woodlawn and Five Points West Merchant's Association  
Lead Facilitator: Coreata' Houser

LISTENING SESSION 10. BIRMINGHAM BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — October 9, 2020  
Hosted By: Birmingham Business Alliance  
Lead Facilitators: Laura Boyles, Daryl Perkins

LISTENING SESSION 11. ACTIVISTS COMMUNITY

Birmingham, AL via Zoom — October 12, 2020  
Hosted By: Cara McClure

ORGANIZATIONS

Birmingham Business Alliance  
Birmingham Police Department  
Brother Let's Talk  
City of Birmingham Mayor's Office of Division Youth Services  
Magic City Bar Association  
Mayor Randall Woodfin's LGBTQ+ Advisory Board  
Restorative Strategies  
Small Business Council  
Woodlawn and Five Points West Merchant's Association

APPENDIX C. PUBLIC HEARING

The Birmingham Public Safety task force, along with Co-Chairs Councilor Hunter Williams and Mayor Randall L. Woodfin, hosted a public hearing to hear community members' public safety proposals. Proposals could be written or submitted by video and addressed one of the four pillars: Community Empowerment, Policy & Oversight, Training & Education, and Safety & Wellness. The task force and co-chairs thank the individuals and organizations who submitted proposals for their time and expertise.

PUBLIC HEARING

Hosted by: Councilor Hunter Williams, Chair of the Birmingham Public Safety Committee

APPENDIX D. INDIVIDUALS & ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUBMITTED PUBLIC SAFETY PROPOSALS

INDIVIDUALS

A. Policy & Oversight

- Jeff Jackson
- Wendell Major
- Madison March, Fulbright Scholar 2019-2020
- J.D. Stanton
- Tim Sullivan

B. Training & Education

- Lisa Holman, Director of Programs
- D. Rivers, Training Instructor
- Natasha Stallworth

C. Safety & Wellness

- Haley Beech, LMSW-Doctoral Student
- Shantez Carter
- Morris Hiatt
- Fancy Sears, LPC, LMFT, NCC, BC-TMH
- Amber Sutton, LICSW-Doctoral Student
- Yvonne Thomas, Executive Director
- Yvas Witherspoon, Assistant Director
- Robert Weygand

D. Community Empowerment

- Byron Hampton
- Jasper Lee
- Tim Sullivan
- Yvette Chatman

ORGANIZATIONS

- Alzheimer's Association, Alabama Chapter
- Brother Let's Talk
- Dream Initiative
- One Place Metro Alabama Family Justice Center

APPENDIX E. CALL TYPE REPORT

| ALS CALLS                                      |          |        |
|--|----------|--------|
| CALL TYPE                                      | SUB TYPE | NUMBER |
| AA – Asthma Attack                             | ALS      | 55     |
| AR – Allergic Reaction                         | ALS      | 25     |
| BE – Battery Explosion                         | ALS      | 0      |
| BHOT – Heat Related Illness                    | ALS      | 3      |
| BI – Back Injury                               | ALS      | 4      |
| BIKE – Bicyclist Struck                        | ALS      | 2      |
| BURN – Burn Patient                            | ALS      | 3      |
| CA – Cardiac Arrest                            | ALS      | 5      |
| CCH – Child Choking                            | ALS      | 4      |
| COVID – ID Precautions                         | ALS      | 0      |
| CP – Chest Pains                               | ALS      | 273    |
| CS – Child Struck                              | ALS      | 2      |
| CSR – Confined Space Rescue                    | ALS      | 2      |
| CUTM – Cut Major/Cutting                       | ALS      | 19     |
| CVA - Stroke                                   | ALS      | 75     |
| DB – Difficulty Breathing                      | ALS      | 437    |
| DI – Diabetic                                  | ALS      | 106    |
| DRN – Drowning                                 | ALS      | 0      |
| EL – Electrocutation                           | ALS      | 2      |
| EMSA – EMS Call at Airport                     | ALS      | 4      |
| EMSI – EMS Call on the Interstate ( Not MVA )  | ALS      | 17     |
| EMSM – EMS Major                               | ALS      | 598    |
| FALM – Fall Major                              | ALS      | 170    |
| FX – Fracture                                  | ALS      | 33     |
| GSW – Gun Shot Wound                           | ALS      | 44     |
| HA – Heart Attack                              | ALS      | 0      |
| HEM – Hemorrhage                               | ALS      | 56     |
| HI – Head Injury                               | ALS      | 7      |
| HP – Heart Patient                             | ALS      | 27     |
| HS – Heat Stroke                               | ALS      | 0      |
| HYPO – Hypothermia                             | ALS      | 0      |
| IA – Industrial Accident                       | ALS      | 5      |
| MUA – Mutual Aid ALS                           | ALS      | 26     |
| MVA – Motor Vehicle Accident                   | ALS      | 298    |
| MVI – Motor Vehicle Accident on the Interstate | ALS      | 117    |
| OB – OB Patient/Childbirth                     | ALS      | 38     |

|  |     |      |
|--|-----|------|
| OD – Overdose                                    | ALS | 63   |
| PC – Person Choking                              | ALS | 2    |
| POIS – Poisoning                                 | ALS | 5    |
| PS – Pedestrian Struck                           | ALS | 17   |
| PT – Person Trapped ( Not MVA )                  | ALS | 1    |
| PUC – Person Unconscious                         | ALS | 149  |
| RA – Respiratory Arrest                          | ALS | 5    |
| SCHV – School Violence (GSW, Stabbing, CUTM)     | ALS | 0    |
| SEXA – Sexual Assault                            | ALS | 3    |
| SNKB – Snakebite                                 | ALS | 1    |
| STAB – Stabbing                                  | ALS | 12   |
| SUI – Attempted Suicide                          | ALS | 11   |
| SZ – Seizure                                     | ALS | 210  |
| TAZR – Tazed Patient                             | ALS | 3    |
| WCO – MVA Car Overturned                         | ALS | 23   |
| WM – Motor Vehicle Accident Involving Motorcycle | ALS | 16   |
| WPT – Motor Vehicle Accident Person Trapped      | ALS | 15   |
| WSI – Motor Vehicle Accident with Spinal Injury  | ALS | 0    |
| TOTAL  | ALS | 2993 |

| BLS CALLS                                     |          |        |
|---|----------|--------|
| CALL TYPE                                     | SUB TYPE | NUMBER |
| AB – Animal Bite                              | BLS      | 12     |
| AOE – Assist Occupant EMS                     | BLS      | 305    |
| ASLT – Assault                                | BLS      | 148    |
| CUT – Cut Minor                               | BLS      | 19     |
| EYE – Eye Injury                              | BLS      | 3      |
| FALL – Fall Minor                             | BLS      | 98     |
| FDAI – Fire Department Accident with Injuries | BLS      | 0      |
| FFI – Firefighter Injury                      | BLS      | 5      |
| MA – Investigate a Medical Alarm              | BLS      | 121    |
| MACE – Mace Patient                           | BLS      | 3      |
| MED – Medical Aid                             | BLS      | 1072   |
| MEDC – Medical Aid on a Child                 | BLS      | 50     |
| MUB – Mutual Aid BLS                          | BLS      | 0      |
| NB – Nose Bleed                               | BLS      | 9      |
| PD – Person Down                              | BLS      | 203    |
| RR – Ring Removal                             | BLS      | 0      |
| UNK – Unknown Medical Aid                     | BLS      | 51     |
| TOTAL   | BLS      | 2099   |



| FIRE CALLS  |          |        |
|---|----------|--------|
| CALL TYPE   | SUB TYPE | NUMBER |
| AIR – Air Conditioner                             | Fire     | 3      |
| ALA – Investigate an Alarm at the Airport         | Fire     | 0      |
| ALERT 1 – (Red Bird Code)                         | Fire     | 0      |
| ALERT 2 – (Red Bird Code)                         | Fire     | 0      |
| AOF – Assist the Occupant Fire                    | Fire     | 32     |
| APT – Apartment Fire                              | Fire     | 15     |
| ASP – Assist the Police                           | Fire     | 9      |
| AUTI – Automobile Fire on Interstate              | Fire     | 3      |
| AUTO – Automobile Fire                            | Fire     | 27     |
| BHF – Boarding Home Fire                          | Fire     | 0      |
| BT – Bomb Threat                                  | Fire     | 0      |
| BUS – Bus Fire                                    | Fire     | 0      |
| CF – Commercial Structure Fire                    | Fire     | 0      |
| CMD – Investigate a Carbon Monoxide Detector      | Fire     | 12     |
| DECK – All Fires in Parking Deck                  | Fire     | 0      |
| DISH – Dishwasher                                 | Fire     | 0      |
| DRY – Dryer                                       | Fire     | 1      |
| DUMP – Dumpster                                   | Fire     | 13     |
| ER – Elevator Rescue                              | Fire     | 12     |
| EXPL – Explosion                                  | Fire     | 0      |
| FB – Investigate a Fuse/Breaker Box               | Fire     | 1      |
| FDA – Fire Department Accident ( No Injuries)     | Fire     | 6      |
| FSI – Fuel Spill on the Interstate                | Fire     | 1      |
| FTS – Fuel Tanker Spill                           | Fire     | 0      |
| FURN – Investigate a Furnace                      | Fire     | 2      |
| GF – Garage Fire (Detached)                       | Fire     | 1      |
| GRAS – Grass Fire                                 | Fire     | 10     |
| GRSI – Grass Fire on Interstate                   | Fire     | 0      |
| HF – House Fire                                   | Fire     | 28     |
| HIGH – High Rise Structure Fire ( Over 5 Stories) | Fire     | 0      |
| HZ1H  | Fire     | 0      |
| HZIS  | Fire     | 0      |
| HZM   | Fire     | 0      |
| HZOA  | Fire     | 0      |
| HZRF  | Fire     | 0      |
| HZRR  | Fire     | 0      |
| HZSF  | Fire     | 0      |
| HZSP  | Fire     | 1      |

| FIRE CALLS (CONT.)                           |          |        |
|--|----------|--------|
| CALL TYPE                                    | SUB TYPE | NUMBER |
| HZST   | Fire     | 1      |
| HZUN   | Fire     | 2      |
| IFO – Investigate Fire Reported Out          | Fire     | 2      |
| IN – Investigate                             | Fire     | 37     |
| INA – Investigate an Alarm                   | Fire     | 324    |
| INAM – Investigate an Alarm, (Hospital Etc.) | Fire     | 69     |
| IND – Industrial Complex Fire                | Fire     | 0      |
| INFS – Investigate a Fuel Spill              | Fire     | 1      |
| LFX – Light Fixture Inside or Outside        | Fire     | 0      |
| MALL – Mall Fire – Mass Occupancy            | Fire     | 0      |
| MH – Motor Home                              | Fire     | 0      |
| MOBF – Mass Occupancy Building Fire          | Fire     | 0      |
| MUF – Mutual Aid Fire                        | Fire     | 4      |
| NGLK – Investigate a Natural Gas Leak        | Fire     | 11     |
| OBLD – Outbuilding                           | Fire     | 2      |
| ODOR – Investigate an Odor                   | Fire     | 12     |
| RRC – Railroad Car                           | Fire     | 0      |
| SA – Investigate a Smoke Alarm               | Fire     | 14     |
| SCHF – School Fire                           | Fire     | 0      |
| SPK – Sprinkler Alarm                        | Fire     | 0      |
| STOV – Stove/Food on Stove                   | Fire     | 9      |
| TD – Tree Down                               | Fire     | 0      |
| THF – Townhouse Fire                         | Fire     | 0      |
| TOS – Tree on a Structure                    | Fire     | 4      |
| TP – Tar Pot                                 | Fire     | 0      |
| TRAN – Transformer                           | Fire     | 6      |
| TREE – Tree                                  | Fire     | 3      |
| TRK – Truck Fire                             | Fire     | 0      |
| TRKI – Truck Fire on Interstate              | Fire     | 2      |
| TRSH – Trash Fire                            | Fire     | 17     |
| WASH – Washing Machine                       | Fire     | 0      |
| WH – Water Heater                            | Fire     | 1      |
| WI – Investigate Wiring Inside               | Fire     | 10     |
| WO – Investigate Wires Outside               | Fire     | 18     |
| WOOD – Woods Fire                            | Fire     | 2      |
| WR – Water Rescue                            | Fire     | 0      |
| TOTAL  | Fire     | 728    |

| FIRE/EMS CALLS                                 |          |        |
|--|----------|--------|
| CALL TYPE                                      | SUB TYPE | NUMBER |
| AOFF – Plane Crash Off Airport                 | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| APTE – Apartment Fire With Injury              | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| AUPT – Automobile Fire Person Trapped          | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| CD – Civil Disturbance                         | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| CFA – Industrial Building Fire with Injuries   | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| CFE – Commercial Structure Fire with Injuries  | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| HER – High Angle Rescue                        | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| HFE – House Fire With Injuries                 | FIRE/EMS | 1      |
| HPT – House Fire Person Trapped                | FIRE/EMS | 2      |
| HZFE – Hazmat Call with Injuries               | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| LAON – Large Aircraft on Airport Property      | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| MC – Mass Casualty Incident                    | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| MUFE – Mutual Fire Call with Injury            | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| SAON – Small Aircraft on Airport Property      | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| ST – Strike Team                               | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| SWR – Swift Water Rescue                       | FIRE/EMS | 0      |
| WF – Motor Vehicle Accident with Fire Involved | FIRE/EMS | 1      |
| TOTAL  | FIRE/EMS | 4      |

| ALS  | BLS  | EMS  | FIRE | FIRE/EMS | TOTAL | TRANSPORTS |
|------|------|------|------|----------|-------|------------|
| 2993 | 2099 | 5092 | 728  | 4        |       |            |

| NON-EMERGENCY CALLS               |      |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| DUP – Duplicate Call              | 484  |
| NON – Non Response Call           | 513  |
| XFER – Transfer to Another Agency | 178  |
| TOTAL                             | 1175 |

| APPENDIX F. CAMPAIGN ZERO  |      |
|--|------|
| Sample online survey of 260 voters fielded from October 13 to October 26, 2020.<br>Margin of Error ±8%   |      |
| 1. In many circumstances, police are allowed to execute so-called “no-knock raids,” in which police breach a premises by force to execute a search warrant, typically for evidence in drug-related cases. In other cases, police must announce themselves prior to entering a premises. Would you [support or oppose] a ban on “no-knock raids” except in extreme circumstances such as a hostage situation or in pursuit of a murderer? |      |
| Strongly support   | 31%  |
| Somewhat support   | 18%  |
| Somewhat oppose  | 11%  |
| Strongly oppose  | 28%  |
| Not sure   | 11%  |
| Totals   | 99%  |
| Unweighted N   | 259  |
| 2. Even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?  |      |
| When carrying out a search warrant or arrest, the officers should be identifiable as police officers by their uniform and badge  | 86%  |
| Police officers should not have to be carrying a badge or wearing a uniform to carry out a search warrant or make an arrest  | 4%   |
| Not sure   | 9%   |
| Totals   | 99%  |
| Unweighted N   | 258  |
| 3. Even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?  |      |
| When police are executing a warrant, unless officers feel reasonably certain someone's life is in danger, officers should knock loudly and give those behind the door a reasonable timeframe to let them in  | 73%  |
| When police are executing a warrant, unless officers feel reasonably certain someone's life is in danger, we don't need rules for how officers announce themselves at the door before entering   | 15%  |
| Not sure   | 12%  |
| Totals   | 100% |
| Unweighted N   | 259  |

|   |      |
|---|------|
| 4. Would you [support or oppose] a policy requiring on-duty police officers to have body cameras that would be active while executing a warrant, including five minutes before and after executing a warrant?   |      |
| Strongly support  | 70%  |
| Somewhat support  | 16%  |
| Somewhat oppose   | 4%   |
| Strongly oppose   | 2%   |
| Not sure  | 8%   |
| Totals  | 100% |
| Unweighted N  | 260  |
| 5. Often, before entering a premises to conduct a raid or execute a warrant, police will use stun devices or “flashbangs” to temporarily disorient or disable those in the area. Even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view? |      |
| The use of stun devices should be limited to extreme cases, when officers can be reasonably certain they will only impact those who pose a physical threat to officers  | 67%  |
| The use of stun devices should not be limited to extreme cases, even if officers can't be sure they will only impact those who pose a threat  | 15%  |
| Police should never be allowed to use stun devices  | 5%   |
| Not sure  | 13%  |
| Totals  | 100% |
| Unweighted N  | 258  |
| 6. Lately, nighttime police raids that occur while people are typically sleeping have become controversial in light of recent events. Even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?  |      |
| Police should reduce the use of nighttime raids, which have resulted in too many violent incidents  | 61%  |
| Lately, though nighttime police raids have sometimes resulted in accidents, they have also been valuable in combating crime. Police should continue using nighttime raids   | 24%  |
| Not sure  | 15%  |
| Totals  | 100% |
| Unweighted N  | 258  |

|   |      |
|---|------|
| 7. While executing a warrant or searching for evidence, police are allowed to seize and keep any personal assets, such as cash or cars, if they suspect those assets are involved in a crime, even if there is never a related arrest or conviction. Would you [support or oppose] using federal revenue to create a national database tracking assets seized, and those assets' value if police sell them off? |      |
| Strongly support  | 38%  |
| Somewhat support  | 26%  |
| Somewhat oppose   | 10%  |
| Strongly oppose   | 9%   |
| Not sure  | 17%  |
| Totals  | 100% |
| Unweighted N  | 259  |
| 8. Currently, police are allowed to seize and keep any personal assets, such as cash or cars, if they suspect those assets are involved in a crime, even if there is never a related arrest or conviction. Given this information, which of the following is closest to your view?  |      |
| Police should be able to keep or sell seized assets even if there is never a related conviction   | 5%   |
| Police should only be able to keep or sell seized assets if a court agrees those assets are related to a crime or arrest  | 42%  |
| Police should never be able to keep or sell seized assets, and should return them once an investigation is closed   | 23%  |
| Police should not be able to seize assets, only document them as needed for an investigation  | 18%  |
| Not sure  | 11%  |
| Totals  | 99%  |
| Unweighted N  | 260  |
| 9. Currently, police are allowed to obtain a warrant to search a person's home, without that person's permission, in order to investigate if someone has drugs or is engaged in drug-related activity. Which of the following is closest to your view?  |      |
| Police should never be able to search someone's home without their permission   | 25%  |
| Police should only be able to search someone's home without their permission if they are suspected of a violent crime, not for suspected drug offenses or other nonviolent crime  | 48%  |
| Police should be able to search someone's home without their permission for any suspected crime   | 13%  |
| Not sure  | 15%  |
| Totals  | 101% |
| Unweighted N  | 257  |

|   |      |
|---|------|
| 10. Birmingham's latest budget for Fiscal Year 2021 increases the Birmingham Police Department's budget from \$93 million to \$104 million per year. Do you [support or oppose] increasing the Birmingham Police Department budget? |      |
| Strongly support  | 27%  |
| Somewhat support  | 27%  |
| Somewhat oppose   | 16%  |
| Strongly oppose   | 11%  |
| Not sure  | 19%  |
| Totals  | 100% |
| Unweighted N  | 259  |
| 11. Even if it isn't exactly right, which of the following is closer to your view?  |      |
| The current Birmingham Police Department budget is too high   | 19%  |
| The current Birmingham Police Department budget is about right  | 32%  |
| The current Birmingham Police Department budget is too low  | 19%  |
| Not sure  | 29%  |
| Totals  | 99%  |
| Unweighted N  | 260  |
| 12. Would you [support or oppose] redirecting some of the current Birmingham Police Department budget toward creating and funding...  |      |
| A compensation fund for victims of excessive force or abuse from BPD officers   |      |
| Strongly support  | 39%  |
| Somewhat support  | 19%  |
| Somewhat oppose   | 17%  |
| Strongly oppose   | 10%  |
| Not sure  | 15%  |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| New community social programs, such as establishing teams of unarmed first responders to deal with complaints that do not require armed officers |     |
| Strongly support   | 32% |
| Somewhat support   | 30% |
| Somewhat oppose  | 14% |
| Strongly oppose  | 11% |
| Not sure   | 13% |

This survey is based on 260 interviews conducted by YouGov on the internet of registered voters in Birmingham, Alabama. The sample was weighted according to gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and 2016 Presidential vote choice based on the American Community Study and the Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement. Respondents were selected from YouGov to be representative of registered voters. The weights range from 0.09 to 6.74 with a mean of 1 and a standard deviation of 0.96. The margin of error (a 95% confidence interval) for a sample percentage p based upon the subsetting sample is approximately 8%. It is calculated using the formula:

$$\hat{p} \pm 100 \times \sqrt{\frac{1 + CV^2}{n}}$$

where CV is the coefficient of variation of the sample weights and n is the sample size used to compute the proportion. This is a measure of sampling error (the average of all estimates obtained using the same sample selection and weighting procedures repeatedly). The sample estimate should differ from its expected value by less than the margin of error in 95% of all samples. It does not reflect non-sampling errors, including potential selection bias in panel participation or in response to a particular survey.

Source: Campaign Zero, YouGov Blue - Birmingham, October 2020



## XII

# WORK CITED

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